

THE  
MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA  
VOLUME III.





THE  
MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA

THE STORY  
AND  
THE ESSENCE OF THE EPIC

BY  
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VOLUME III

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## BY THE SAME AUTHOR

	Rs.
THE MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA    Vol. I..	12
(A VISION OF THE VEDAS)	
THE MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA    Vol. II..	8
(THE SYSTEMS OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION)	
THE MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA    Vol. III..	8
(THE STORY AND THE ESSENCE OF THE EPIC)	
THE MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA    Vol. IV..	8
(THE EXPLANATION OF THE EPIC)	
THE TRIUMPH OF DELHI AND OTHER POEMS    ..	2
KRISHNA'S FLUTE AND OTHER POEMS    ..    ..	3
ASOKA AND OTHER POEMS    ..    ..    ..    ..	2
THE GARDEN OF THE EAST    ..    ..    ..    ..	2-8

## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Adi P.</i>	<i>Adi Parva</i>
<i>Ait. Ar. Up.</i>	<i>Aitareya Aranyaka Upanishad</i>
<i>Asva. P.</i>	<i>Asvamedha Parva</i>
<i>BhG.</i>	<i>Bhagavad Gita</i>
<i>Brih. Up.</i>	<i>Brihadaranyaka Upanishad</i>
<i>Chh. Up.</i>	<i>Chhandogya Upanishad</i>
<i>Katha Up.</i>	<i>Katha Upanishad</i>
<i>MBh.</i>	<i>Mahabharata</i>
<i>MM.</i>	<i>The Mystery of the Mahabharata</i>
<i>Santi P.</i>	<i>Santi Parva</i>
<i>SBE.</i>	<i>Sacred Books of the East</i>
<i>Up.</i>	<i>Upanishad</i>

## SYMBOLS

As in the previous Volumes, the long vowels are printed in italic type; so are Lingual or Cerebral letters, *t*, *th*, *d*, *dh*, *n*. Palatal *s* is as in *sure*; and *ri* is a vowel as in *merrily*. *Visarga* is



# CONTENTS

## PART I.

### *The Story of the Epic*

## I. ADI PARVA

### CHAPTER I

#### THE BIRTH OF HEROES

1. Invocation. 2. The Sacrifice of the Snake. 3. Vyasa and Ganesa. 4. The Character of the Mahabharata. 5. The Story of Uparichara. 6. Satyavati and Vyasa. 7. The Court of Brahma: Mahabhisha and Ganga. 8. Pratipa and Ganga. 9. Santanu. 10. Santanu and Ganga. 11. Bhishma or Dyaus. 12. Santanu and Satyavati. 13. Chitrangada and Vichitra-virya. 14. Amba, Ambika, Ambalika. 15. The Niyoga of Vyasa. 16. Dhritarashtra, Pandu, and Vidura. 17. The Marriage of the Princes. 18. Gandhari. 19. One Hundred Sons of Dhritarashtra. 20. The Story of Kunti. 21. The Birth of Karna. 22. Pritha and Pandu. 23. The Marriage of Madri. 24. The five Sons of Pandu. 25. The Death of Pandu and Madri. 26. The Death of Satyavati and Ambalika. 27. The Story of Kripa. 28. The Story of Drona. 29. Asvatthaman. 30. Dru-

pada. 31. Drona and Drupada. 32. Drona as Teacher of the Princes. 33. The Proficiency of the Princes. 34. The Tournament. 35. Karna and Arjuna. 36. The Defeat of Drupada. 37. Yudhishtira as Heir Apparent: Bhima and Balarama.

## CHAPTER II

## THE HOUSE OF LAC

21

38. The Hostility of Kauravas. 39. Vidura to the Rescue. 40. The House of Lac. 41. In the House of Lac. 42. The Burning of the House. 43. Across the Ganga. 44. Kunti is Thirsty. 45. Hidimba. 46. Bhima and Hidimba: Ghatotkacha. 47. Vaka.

## CHAPTER III

## THE MARRIAGE OF DRAUPADI

25

48. The Sacrifice of Drupada. 49. The Birth of Dhrishtadyumna. 50. The Birth of Draupadi or Krishna. 51. Dhaumya. 52. The Potter's House. 53. The Test. 54. Krishna Recognises the Pandavas. 55. Shooting the Mark: Karna's Attempt. 56. The Success of Arjuna. 57. The Wife of Five. 58. The Pandavas at Home. 59. Division of the Kingdom.

## CONTENTS

12

### CHAPTER IV

#### THREE NEW BRIDES OF ARJUNA 31

60. Life at Indraprastha. 61. Arjuna's Exile. 62. The Wives of Arjuna : Arjuna and Ulupi. 63. Arjuna and Chitrangada. 64. Arjuna and Subhadra. 65. The Birth of Abhimanyu. 66. The Sons of Draupadi.

### CHAPTER V

#### THE BURNING OF KHANDAVA FOREST 35

67. The Burning of Khandava Forest.

### II. SABHA PARVA

### CHAPTER VI

#### THE ASSEMBLY HALL OF YUDHISH- THIRA 36

68. Maya and the Assembly Hall. 69. The Visit of Narada. 70. The Arrival of Krishna. 71. The Death of Jarasandha. 72. The Rajasuya Sacrifice. 73. The Arghya. 74. Sisupala. 75. The Threat of Sahadeva. 76. The Death of Sisupala. 77. The End of the Sacrifice. 78. The Chagrin of Duryodhana. 79. The Proposal of Sakuni.

## CHAPTER VII

## THE GAME OF DICE

42

80. The Hall of Kauravas. 81. The Commission of Vidura. 82. The *Pandavas* in Hastinapura. 83. The Rules of the Game. 84. Sakuni and Yudhishthira as Players. 85. The Game of Dice. 86. The Deceit of Sakuni. 87. The Stake of Draupadi. 88. Draupadi and the Assembly Hall. 89. The Question of Draupadi. 90. Yudhishthira's Message to Draupadi. 91. The Outrage of Duhsasana. 92. The Anguish of Draupadi. 93. Bhishma's Reply. 94. The Unrobing of *Pandavas* and Draupadi. 95. Krishna to the Rescue. 96. The Vow of Bhima. 97. The Question of Draupadi. 98. The Answer of Bhishma. 99. Duryodhana's Thigh. 100. Dhritarashtra's Intervention. 101. The Second Game. 102. Preparations for Exile. 103. Farewell.

## III. VANA PARVA

## CHAPTER VIII

## IN THE FOREST

52

104. The Banks of the Ganga. 105. The Discourse of Saunaka. 106. The Worship of the Sun. 107. Draupadi and the Boon of the Sun. 108. The Forest of *Kamyaka*. 109. The Visit of Vidura and



*Krishna*. 110. The Worship of *Krishna*.  
111. The Cause of *Pandavas* ' Misfortune.  
112. The Departure of *Krishna*, *Subha-*  
*dra* and *Abhimanyu*. 113. The Forest  
of *Dvaita*. 114. The Discourse of *Drau-*  
*padi*. 115. The Advice of *Vyasa*.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MISSION OF ARJUNA

57

116. The Quest. 117. *Siva* and *Ar-*  
*juna*. 118. The Gifts of the Gods. 119.  
In the City of *Indra*: *Chitrasena* and  
*Urvashi*.

## CHAPTER X

### THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE PANDAVAS

60

120. From *Kamyaka* to *Gandhama-*  
*dana*. 121. The Help of *Ghatotkacha*.  
122. The Celestial Lotus. 123. *Bhima*  
and *Hanuman*. 124. *Bhima* and the  
Lotus. 125. Absorption in *Yoga*. 126.  
The Return of *Arjuna*. 127. *Dvaita-*  
*vana* and *Kamyaka* again. 128. The  
Visit of *Krishna* and *Satyabhama*. 129.  
*Narada* and *Markandeya*: the Discourse of  
*Markandeya*. 130. The Departure of  
*Krishna*.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PERIOD OF PROBATION

65

131. *Duryodhana* in *Dvaitavana*. 132.  
*Karna* and the Sacrifice with the Golden

132. Jayadratha and Draupadi. 133. The Disgrace of Jayadratha. 134. Jayadratha and Mahadeva. 135. The Stories of Rukma and Savitri. 136. Indra and Karna's Armour and Ear-rings. 137. The Questions of the Crane.

## IV. VIRATA PARVA

### CHAPTER XII

#### IN THE KINGDOM OF VIRATA

72

139. The Disguise of the *Pandavas*. 140. To Virata's Kingdom. 141. The Disposal of Weapons. 142. In the King's Service. 143. Kichaka and Draupadi. 144. Bhima and Kichaka. 145. The Capture of the Cows. 146. The Fight. 147. Uttara and Arjuna. 148. Arjuna in Arms. 149. The End of Exile. 150. The Defeat of Kauravas. 151. Uttara and Abhimanyu. 152. The *Pandavas* in Upaplavya.

## V. UDYOGA PARVA

### CHAPTER XIII

#### PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

79

153. The Advice of Krishna. 154. The Assistance of Krishna. 155. Balarama's Neutrality. 156. Kritavarman. 157. Krishna and Arjuna. 158. The Part of Salya. 159. Salya and the *Pandavas*.

160. The Forces of *Pandavas* and *Kauravas*.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE MESSENGERS OF PEACE 83

161. The Embassies. 162. The Mission of Sanjaya. 163. *Krishna's* Intervention. 164. The Offer of *Krishna*. 165. The Offer of *Yudhishthira*: five Villages. 166. The Advice of *Vidura*. 167. The Discourse of *Sanat-Sujata*. 168. The Council of Peace. 169. *Duryodhana's* Determination.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE MISSION OF KRISHNA 90

170. *Krishna* at *Hastinapura*. 171. *Krishna's* Reception. 172. The Resolve of *Duryodhana*. 173. *Krishna* Among the *Kauravas*. 174. *Krishna* in the Assembly Hall. 175. The Advice of *Krishna*. 176. The King's Helplessness. 177. *Duryodhana's* Resolve. 178. *Krishna's* Rebuke. 179. *Gandhari's* Advice. 180. The Capture of *Krishna*. 181. The Divine Form of *Krishna*. 182. *Krishna's* Return: the Message of *Kunti*. 183. *Krishna* and *Karna*. 184. *Kunti* and *Karna*. 185. *Krishna's* Return. 186. *Dhrishtadyumna's* Command. 187. The Field of *Kurukshetra*. 188. The *Kaurava* Forces:

Bhishma's Command. 189. Bhishma and Karna. 190. The Vow of Bhishma. 191. The Story of Sikhandin. 192. The Order of Battle.

## VI. BHISHMA PARVA

### CHAPTER XVI

#### THE FIELD OF BATTLE

100

193. The Rules of Combat. 194. Sanjaya and Dhritarashtra. 195. The Battle Arrays.

### CHAPTER XVII

#### THE BHAGAVAD GITA

102

196. Chapter I : The Grief of Arjuna at Yoga. 197. Chapter II : Yoga in Relation to Sankhya. 198. Chapter III : Yoga in Relation to Action. 199. Chapter IV : Yoga in Relation to Knowledge and Action. 200. Chapter V : Yoga in Relation to Renunciation. 201. Chapter VI : Yoga in Relation to Soul-Knowledge. 202. Chapter VII : Yoga in Relation to the Understanding of Knowledge. 203. Chapter VIII : Yoga in Relation to Imperishable Brahma. 204. Chapter IX : Yoga in Relation to the Secret of Rajas. 205. Chapter X : Yoga in Relation to the Glimpse of Divine Glory. 206. Chapter XI : Yoga in Relation to a Vision of the Universal Form. 207.

Chapter XII : Yoga in Relation to Devotion. 208. Chapter XIII : Yoga in Relation to the Field and Knower of the Field. 209. Chapter XIV : Yoga in Relation to the Division of Three Gunas. 210. Chapter XV : Yoga in Relation to the Supreme Purusha. 211. Chapter XVI : Yoga in Relation to the Division of Divine and Demoniatic Attributes. 212. Chapter XVII : Yoga in Relation to the Three-fold Path. 213. Chapter XVIII. Yoga in Relation to Renunciation.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### BHISHMA'S BATTLE OF TEN DAYS

196

214. The First Day of Battle. 215. Yuyutsu Joins the *Pandavas*. 216. The Battle. 217. The Second Day of Battle. 218. The Third Day of Battle. 219. The Fourth Day of Battle. 220. The Fifth Day of Battle. 221. The Sixth Day of Battle. 222. The Seventh Day of Battle. 223. The Eighth Day of Battle. 224. The Ninth Day of Battle. 225. The Tenth Day of Battle. 226. Bhishma's Advice. 227. Sikhandin's Part. 228. The Fall of Bhishma. 229. The Bed of Arrows. 230. Arjuna Brings out Water from the Earth. 231. Bhishma's Advice to Duryodhana. 232. Karna seeks Permission to fight.

## VII. DRONA PARVA

## CHAPTER XIX

## DRONA'S BATTLE OF FIVE DAYS

206

233. Drona as Commander-in-chief.  
 234. The Eleventh Day of Battle. 235.  
 The Attempt to Capture Yudhishthira. 236.  
 The Twelfth Day of Battle. 237. The  
 Battle Arrays. 238. The Fight. 239.  
 Arjuna and Samsaptakas : Krishna's Part.  
 240. The Thirteenth Day of Battle. 241.  
 The Circular Array. 242. The Task of  
 Abhimanyu. 243. Abhimanyu's Fight.  
 244. The Death of Abhimanyu. 245.  
 Vyasa Consoles Yudhishthira. 246. The  
 Vow of Arjuna. 247. The Difference  
 between Arjuna and Jayadratha. 248.  
 Krishna's Part. 249. The Worship  
 of Mahadeva. 250. The Weapons of  
 Mahadeva. 251. The Fourteenth Day  
 of Battle: Drona's Arrays. 252. Arjuna's  
 Fight. 253. The Horses of Arjuna.  
 254. The General Fight. 255. The  
 Death of Bhurisravas. 256. The  
 Death of Jayadratha. 257. The Night  
 Attack. 258. The Lamp-Light Attack.  
 259. The Death of Ghatotkacha. 260.  
 The Moon-Light Fight. 261. The Fif-  
 teenth Day of Battle. 262. Asvattha-  
 man the Elephant. 263. Drona Questions  
 Yudhishthira. 264. Krishna's Advice to  
 Yudhishthira. 265. Yudhishthira's Lie. 266.

The Chariot of Yudhishthira 267. Dhrishadyumna Slays Drona. 268. The Vow of Asvatthaman. 269. The Narayana Weapon. 270. The Vision of Arjuna.

## VIII. KARNA PARVA

### CHAPTER XX

KARNA'S BATTLE OF TWO DAYS 224

271. Karna as Commander-in-chief. 272. The Sixteenth Day of Battle. 273. The Seventeenth Day of Battle. 274. Fight between Arjuna and Karna. 275. Karna Charges the Pandavas. 276. Krishna's Advice to Arjuna. 277. The Quarrel between Yudhishthira and Arjuna. 278. Bhima Slays Duhsasana and Drinks his Blood. 279. Fight between Arjuna and Karna : the Death of Karna.

## IX. SALYA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXI

THE DEFEAT OF KAURAVAS 229

280. The Grief of Duryodhana. 281. The Eighteenth Day of Battle : Salya as Commander-in-chief. 282. The Combat. 283. The Death of Salya. 284. A General Fight. 285. The Attempt of Duryodhana. 286. Duryodhana in the Lake. 287. Krishna's Advice to Pandavas. 288. The Challenge. 289. The Fight

with Mace. 290. The Anxiety of Krishna. 291. Balarama as a Witness. 292. The Fight. 293. Krishna's Opinion and Advice. 294. The Death of Duryodhana. 295. The Result of Duryodhana's Fall. 296. The Anger of Balarama. 297. The Pandavas in Duryodhana's Tent. 298. The Burning of Arjuna's Car. 299. Oghavati. 300. Krishna in Hastinapura. 301. The Survivors of Kauravas. 302. The Hope of Duryodhana. 303. The Vow of Asvatthaman.

## X. SAUPTIKA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXII

#### THE SLAUGHTER IN SLEEP

238

304. The Scheme of Asvatthaman. 305. The Slaughter of Panchalas. 306. The Survivors of the Pandavas. 307. The Gem of Asvatthaman. 308. The Weapon of Asvatthaman.

## XI. STRI PARVA

### CHAPTER XXIII

#### THE WAIL OF WOMEN

242

309. The Grief of Women. 310. Yudhishthira meets Dhritarashtra. 311. The Statue of Iron. 312. The Curse of Gandhari. 313. The Funeral Ceremonies.



XII. SANTI PARVA

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE

246

314. The Doubts of Yudhishthira.  
 315. The Opinion of Devasthana and  
 Vyasa. 316. The Advice of Krishna.  
 317. Bhishma Worships Krishna. 318.  
 Krishna asks Bhishma to teach  
 Yudhishthira. 319. Bhishma's Discourse.  
 320. The Discourse of Bhṛigu. 321. The  
 Discourse of Bhishma. 322. The  
 Opinion of Manu. 323. The Discourse  
 of Bhishma. 324. The Discourse of  
 Vyasa. 325. The Names of Mahadeva.  
 326. The Difference between Sankhya  
 and Yoga. 327. The Discourse of  
 Vasishtha. 328. Narada's Hymn to  
 Narayana. 329. The Vision of Narada.  
 330. Brahman's Hymn to Narayana.

XIII. ANUSASANA PARVA

CHAPTER XXV

THE SCIENCE OF THE SOUL

278

331. The Worship of Mahadeva.  
 332. Bhishma Adores Krishna. 333.  
 The Death of Bhishma.

XIV. ASVAMEDHA PARVA

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SACRIFICE OF THE HORSE

282

334. The Advice of Vyasa. 335.  
 The Request of Arjuna. 336. Anugita.

337. The Horse Sacrifice. 338. The Birth of Parikshit. 339. The Initiation of Yudhishthira. 340. The Horse set free. 341. Arjuna and Babhruvahana. 342. The Sacrifice of the Horse.

## XV. ASRAMAVASIKA PARVA

## CHAPTER XXVII

## THE DEATH OF DHRITARASHTRA

292

343. The Reign of Pandavas and Dhritarashtra. 344. Dhritarashtra Retires. 345. Kunti's Advice. 346. The Hermitage of Vyasa. 347. The Pandavas' Visit. 348. The Death of Vidura. 349. A Vision of the Dead. 350. The Death of Dhritarashtra and Others.

## XVI. MAUSALA PARVA

## CHAPTER XXVIII

## THE PASSING OF KRISHNA

295

351. After Thirty-six Years. 352. The Disguise of Samba : the Iron Bolt. 353. The Iron Bolt : the Command of Krishna. 354. The Pilgrimage. 355. The Drunken Revelry . 356. The Destruction of Vrishnis and Andhakas. 357. The Death of Balarama. 358. The Death of Krishna. 359. The Arrival of Arjuna. 360. The Message of Krishna. 361. The Death of Vasudeva. 362. The

Submersion of Dvaraka. 363. The Attack of Robbers. 364. The Advice of Vyasa.

## XVII. MAHAPRASTHANA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXIX

#### THE PASSING OF THE PANDAVAS 301

365. The Successors of the Pandavas.  
366. The Last Journey. 367. The Death of Pandavas. 368. Yudhishthira and his Dog.

## XVIII. SVARGAROHANIKA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXX

#### THE ASCENT TO HEAVEN 303

369. The Illusion of Hell. 370. The Abode of Happy Ones. 371. The Vision of Heaven. 372. The End.

---

## PART II.

### *The Essence of the Epic*

#### CHAPTER I

#### THE PROBLEM OF THE MAHABHARATA 309

The Scope of the Epic. The Problem of the Mahabharata. The Character of Kauravas and Pandavas and Other Heroes. Draupadi, the Gambling Match, and the Battle of Kurukshetra. The Part of Krishna. The Character of the Mahabharata.

## CHAPTER II

## THE METHOD OF INTERPRETATION 315

The General Method of Interpretation. The Connection and Conflict between Systems of Philosophy and Religion. The Mind as a Meeting Place. The Significance of Sacrifice. Knowledge and Action. The Method of Letter-analysis. The Meaning of Numbers. The Number Eighteen. Figures of Speech: Synonymns, etc. Personification. Personification of Systems of Philosophy. Personification of Energies in Man. Metaphors, Similes, etc. The City of Nine Gates. Life as a Sacrifice and God-knowledge. The Earth as a Field of Action. The Idea of Battle. The Battle in the Mahabharata. The Language of War. Other forms of Symbolism.

## CHAPTER III

## THE PLAN OF THE MAHABHARATA 341

The Plan of the Mahabharata. The Lunar Line. Principal Yoga or Saivism. Principal Sankhya or Buddhism and Jainism. The Pandavas and Kauravas. The Problem. The Ascending Scale of Thought. The First Conflict between Buddhism and Jainism. Sacrifice and God: Draupadi and Krishna. The Division of the Kingdom of Thought. The

Second Conflict between Saivism and Jainism : The Gambling Match. How can Man be saved ? The Character of *Prana* or the Soul. The Third Conflict between Vaishnavism on one hand and Buddhism and Jainism on the other. The Battle of Kurukshetra. The Result of the Battle. The Descending Scale of Thought.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE HISTORY OF THE MAHABHARATA

351

The Relation of Thoughts and Things. The History of Philosophy and Religion. A Real War. The Teachers of Philosophy. The Universal History of the Human Race. The Date and Author of the Epic.

## CHAPTER V

## THE ESSENCE OF THE EPIC

## I. ADI PARVA

## AN EXPLANATION

360

The Lunar line. Court of Brahma. Uparichara. *Girika*. *Santanu*. *Ganga* and *Santanu*. The Eight Vasus. *Bhishma*. *Santanu's* Interference and *Ganga's* Departure. The Birth of *Vyasa*. *Vyasa* the Author of the *Mahabharata* and other Sacred Books. *Santanu* and *Satyavati*. *Chitrangada* and *Vichitravirya*. The Death of *Santanu*. The Death of *Chitrangada*. *Amba*, *Ambika*, and *Ambalika*. The Death of *Vichitravirya*. The

Niyoga of Vyasa. The Birth of Dhritarashtra. The Birth of Pandu. A Resume. The Plan and the Problem. Dhritarashtra and Gandhari. Their Hundred Sons and one Daughter. Duryodhana. Pandu, Kunti, and Madri. The Birth of Kunti. Kunti and the Brahmana's Boon. Kunti and Karna. Pritha. Karna and the Sun. The Five Pandava Brothers : the Birth of Man. The Death of Pandu, Madri, Satyawati and Ambalika. The Survivors : Ambika Gandhari, Kunti. The Story of Kripa. The Story of Drona. Asvatthaman. Drupada. Draupadi and Dhrishtadyumna. Sikhandin. Kripa as Teacher of the Princes. Drona as Preceptor. Rivalry between Karna and Arjuna. Yudhishthira as Heir-Apparent. Bhima and Balarama. The House of Lac. The Escape. Bhima and Hidimba : Ghatotkacha. The Death of Vaka. The Pandavas and Draupadi : the Appearance of Krishna. The Wife of Five. Division of the Kingdom of Thought. Indraprastha and Hastinapura. The Exile of Arjuna : his Three Wives. The Burning of Khandava Forest. A Summary of Adi-Parva.

## CHAPTER VI

### II. SABHA PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

391

The Assembly Hall of Yudhishthira.  
The Rajasuya Sacrifice. The Death of

Jarāsandha. The Offer of Arghya to Krishna. The Death of Sisupala. The Sacrifice. The Chagrin of Duryodhana. The Proposal of Sakuni. The Hall of the Kauravas. The Game of Dice : Sakuni and Yudhishthira as Players. The Rules of the Game. The Deceit of Sakuni. The Stake of Draupadi. Draupadi in the Assembly Hall. The Unrobing of Draupadi. Krishna to the Rescue. Further Insult to Draupadi. Dhritarashtra's Intervention. The Second Game. The Exile of the Pandavas. A Summary of Sabha Parva.

## CHAPTER VII

## III. VANA PARVA

## AN EXPLANATION

399

The Banks of the Ganga. The Discourse of Saunaka. The Worship of the Sun. Kamyaka Forest : the Visit of Vidura and Krishna. The Worship of Krishna. The Cause of Pandavas' Misfortune. The Advice of Vyasa and the Mission of Arjuna. Siva and Arjuna. In the City of Indra : Arjuna and Urvashi. Jayadratha and Draupadi. The Questions of the Crane. The end of Twelve Years of Exile. A Summary of Vana Parva.

## CHAPTER VIII

## IV. VIRATA PARVA

## AN EXPLANATION

404

Virata's Kingdom : the Disguise of the Pandavas. In the King's Service. Kichaka

and Draupadi: the Death of Kichaka. The Capture of the Cows. The Marriage of Uttara and Abhimanyu. A Summary of Virata Parva.

## CHAPTER IX

### V. UDYOGA PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

407

Preparations for War. Krishna Assists both Sides. Balarama's Neutrality. The Embassies. The Advice of Vidura: the Discourse of Sanat-Sujata. The Mission of Krishna. Duryodhana's Resolve: the Capture of Krishna. The Divine form of Krishna. Krishna's Return. The Field of Kurukshetra. The Nature of the Conflict. The Commanders of the Kauravas. The Forces of the Combatants. Dhrishtadyumna's Command. A Summary of Udyoga Parva.

## CHAPTER X

### VI. BHISHMA PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

416

The Bhagavad Gita as an Epitome of the Epic. Yudhishtira seeks Permission to Fight: Yuyutsu Joins the Pandavas. The Battle. The Bed of Arrows. Arjuna brings out Water from the Earth for Bhishma. A Summary of Bhishma Parva.



## CHAPTER XI

## VII. DRONA PARVA

## AN EXPLANATION

420

Drona as Commander-in-chief. The Battle : the Attempt to Capture Yudhishtira. Arjuna and Samsaptakas. The Death of Abhimanyu. Arjuna's Vow. Krishna's Part in the Fight. The Night-Attack. The Lamp-Light Fight. Krishna's Advice. Asvatthaman the Elephant. Yudhishtira's Lie. Dhrishtadyumna slays Drona. The Vow of Asvatthaman. A Summary of Drona Parva.

## CHAPTER XII

## VIII. KARNA PARVA

## AN EXPLANATION

429

Karna as Commander-in-chief. Fight between Arjuna and Karna. Karna defeats all Pandava Brothers except Arjuna. The Quarrel between Yudhishtira and Arjuna. Fight between Arjuna and Karna. The Death of Karna. A Summary of Karna Parva.

## CHAPTER XIII

## IX. SALYA PARVA

## AN EXPLANATION

432

Salya as Commander-in-chief. Duryodhana's Command. Duryodhana in the

Lake. The Challenge to Duryodhana. The Club Fight. The Blow on the Thigh : the Death of Duryodhana. The Result of Duryodhana's Fall. The Burning of Arjuna's Car. The Survivors of the Kauravas. A Summary of Salya Parva.

## CHAPTER XIV

### X. SAUPTIKA PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

437

The Scheme of Asvatthaman : the Slaughter of the Panchalas. The Survivors of the *Pandavas*. The Gem of Asvatthaman. The Weapon of Asvatthaman : Uttara and Parikshit. A Summary of Sauptika Parva.

## CHAPTER XV

### XI. STRI PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

440

The Curse of Gandhari. A Summary of Stri Parva.

## CHAPTER XVI

### XII. SANTI PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

443

The Doubts of Yudhishthira. The Advice of Krishna : Bhishma's Discourse.

The Discourse of Bhṛigu. The Opinion of Manu. The Discourse of Vyasa. The Names of Mahadeva. The Discourse of Vasishtha. Narada's Hymn to Narayana : the Vision of Narayana. Brahman's Hymn to Narayana. A Summary of *Santi Parva*.

## CHAPTER XVII

## XIII. ANUSASANA PARVA

AN EXPLANATION 447

The Form and Worship of Mahadeva. Bhīshma Adores Krishna. The Death of Bhīshma. A Summary of *Anusasana Parva*.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## XIV. ASVAMEDHA PARVA

AN EXPLANATION 448

The Horse Sacrifice. The Request of Arjuna to Krishna. The *Anugita*. The Sacrifice of the Horse. The Birth of Parikshit. The Dismemberment of the Horse. A Summary of *Asvamedha Parva*.

## CHAPTER XIX

## XV. ASRAMAVASIKA PARVA

AN EXPLANATION 451

The Reign of Dhṛitarāshtra and Pandavas. King Dhṛitarāshtra retires to a

Forest. The Death of Vidura. The Death of Dhritarashtra and Others. A Summary of Asramavasika Parva.

## CHAPTER XX

### XVI. MAUSALA PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

453

The Idea of the Parva. The Disguise of Samba. The Iron Bolt. The Order of Krishna. The Drunken Revel: the Fight: the Destruction of the Race of Krishna. The Death of Balarama and Krishna. The Arrival of Arjuna: the Death of Vasudeva. The Submersion of Dvaraka. The Attack of Robbers. A Summary of Mausala Parva.

## CHAPTER XXI

### XVII. MAHAPRASTHANA PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

457

The Successors of the Pandavas. The Last Journey. The Death of the Pandavas. Yudhishthira and his Dog. A Summary of Mahaprasthana Parva.

## CHAPTER XXII

### XVIII. SVARGAROHANIKI PARVA

#### AN EXPLANATION

461

The Illusion of Hell. The Abode of the Happy ones. The End.

## INTRODUCTION

THE idea of the Mahabharata as a picture of all systems of Philosophy and Religion, as the ancients understood them, occurred to me nearly eleven years ago, and I have come to the end of my task. The reader will now be in a position to judge for himself whether the Epic is a mere Story of mythical heroes and gods, or a historical or semi-historical account of princes and their wars, or else a picture-narrative of the conflict of great moral and spiritual forces of life eternally at play within and without us.

But, assuming that the Mahabharata is a great argument in regard to all systems of ancient Philosophy, what is its use to us to day? We have had enough of Philosophy and Religion; modern life has enough problems of its own without adding to them the solution of the mystery of the Mahabharata; but if the Epic is really a sacred work, what is its contribution to modern life and modern thought?

This question has been put to me a number of times, and might be asked again. All research has a fascination of its own; but in these days of stress and strife we demand something useful from even archæological finds and antiquarian inquiry and interpretation of inscriptions and texts. Nor does it interest the average man very much to know whether the five Pandava brothers were great

heroes or else but five different parts of one Man personified, or Draupadi the wife of five men or a symbol of Sacrifice, or Krishna a man or god, who did or did not do certain doubtful deeds. The more earnest inquirer demands a solution to the problems of life as he sees them today, and neither Philosophy nor Religion, ancient or modern, has any use for him unless it can resolve his doubts and convince his reason in a warring world such as he sees around. A mere re-interpretation of an ancient Epic, however correct or ingenious, is but an irrelevance to him if it has no bearing on the problems of modern life.

All civilization is an application of Knowledge to Life, and all Knowledge is an attempt to solve the problems of life from different points of view. This is specially the aim of all Science, Philosophy, and Religion. But Science has proved to be a double-edged weapon, even more powerful to destroy than to create; Philosophy offers but a doubtful solution, and Religion is often lost in the mist of speculation, with little hold on the actualities of life. Modern civilization presents a spectacle of power and waste, achievement and futility, with the Soul of Man starving in the midst of plenty around. Knowledge has meant not only pleasure and power but pain, not only activity and improvement but strife; and neither Science, nor Philosophy, nor all the great Religions of the world have been able to satisfy the hunger in the heart of Man. Can the Mahabharata, as a picture of all systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion, offer a better solution than all of them?

This conflict in our mind today is the result of conflict between Science, Philosophy and Religion. The discoveries of Science appear to contradict the teachings of Religion, and Philosophy has attempted to reconcile them in vain. And it is only when they can be reconciled that the heart of Man will be at peace and this conflict come to an end. But the question is,—Can they be reconciled ?

The Sacred Books of the Hindus, from the Vedas to the Epic of the Mahabharata, are an attempt at such a reconciliation, and the problem was solved by the ancients as far as human knowledge and experience can solve it. And so, if this be true, a re-interpretation of the Mahabharata, as a picture of all systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion, including as it does the substance of all Sacred Books, must have an abiding interest for all. It explains the problem of Life as it presented itself to the ancients in the past, as it presents itself to us today, and as probably it will present itself to the future ages too. The inquiry of the ancients was both scientific and speculative, their quest both idealistic and practical ; and, starting from the fundamental principles of Physics and Biology, they constructed their magnificent schemes of Philosophy, Metaphysics, and Religion, and directed them to the most practical of all ends,—the work-a-day life of the average man.

What then is this solution ? The ancients proceeded in their quest of Truth from the known

to the unknown, and starting from the world of life around, examined all that it had to show, and then tried to construct their theories about the Unmanifest that lay beyond. They saw that there were five great creative energies in the universe, one unmanifest and four manifest. The four manifest energies are Heat, Electricity, and two forms of Magnetic energy, with north and south poles ; while the unmanifest is higher than Heat, and appears like Electric energy of an extraordinary intensity, and may be called Super-electric. It is this that is transformed into Heat, which again is transformed into Electric energy, and the latter in its turn into Magnetic energy with its north and south poles. It is out of this that all forms of life, both organic and inorganic, evolve.

Further, they believed that, since there is one great Law for all forms of life in the universe, the tiniest Cell contains the same creative energies ; and these in Man correspond to his Soul, Buddhi or the power of Reason, Mind, and the Senses of Knowledge and Action. And so, in order to explain their idea in simple, yet popular form, they personified these creative energies and conceived of their gods in their light, and constructed their five great systems of Philosophy corresponding each to each, and the four great systems of Religion according to the range of their thought. All this has been explained in the first two Volumes.

But the question still remains, How does this solve the problem of life? The ancients believed that the central figure amidst all problems of life



is Man. It is he who is haunted by doubts, and it is he who must be satisfied. And so they held that the solution of the problem must be examined in relation to Man himself. Now Man consists of the five great creative energies of the universe, corresponding to which he has the Soul, Buddhi Mind, and the Senses of Knowledge and Action ; and so the solution of the problem must be examined in the light of each of these, and then alone we can understand the whole.

All Knowledge is from the known to the unknown, and it is necessary to begin at the bottom of the scale. When we use our senses, we see the world of life around us, full of sorrow, suffering and death, and there is none who believes that he is happy. There is a measure of joy indeed, but it soon passes away, leaving the marks of pain deeper than before. We wish to be happy but are miserable, we wish to live but we die, and there is none but has some desire unfulfilled, some great yearning unsatisfied.

Nor does our quest end here. We see that our life is but a span between two unknowns, and we know not whence we came and whither we pass. Hence, while we must study and examine the known, we need to argue and speculate about the unknown, but systematically and logically, and on the analogy of what we see within and without us in the world. Even so we realize that the analysis of the material world is not the end, and there is something else that lies beyond.

Then, when we ask the question,—Who made the universe ? three answers appear : (1) that the

universe is created by itself, and there is no other creator outside it ; (2) that there is an outside creator, whom we may call God, who is higher than the universe, and all life is created by him ; and (3) that God and the universe (Nature) unitedly create all forms of life, like man and woman in the world. The first two points of view are clear and unambiguous; but when we consider the relation of God and Nature in their joint creation, we might hold (1) that the share of God is more than that of Nature, or (2) that the two are equal, or (3) that the share of Nature is more than that of God. This gives us five points of view, corresponding to the five great creative energies of life in the universe and in Man ; and it is on these that the five great systems of Hindu Philosophy are based. This has been explained in the previous Volume.

But the question is,—What is God ? If we can argue only from the known to the unknown, how do we get the idea of God, who is beyond this universe and is said to create it ? The real question, however, that troubles the human mind is not What is God ? but Why do we think at all of God ? If we were perfect, if we were happy, if we could do what we desired, live as long as we wished, we would not think of God or any other power higher than our own. We are compelled to think of a higher power or God because of our mortality, imperfections and unhappiness. We wish to live and we wish to be happy ; and so we must agree that Life and Happiness are not only desirable but possible of attainment too ; and so the Being who, we imagine, is supremely happy and lives for ever, is God.

Then we might ask,—What is it that makes us unhappy? We realize that it is Mutability or change, and it arises out of Action conceived in its widest significance. If all things were permanent, if nothing could change, in other words, if there were no Action of any kind, we would not feel miserable. It is because a person is young today and old tomorrow, rich today and poor tomorrow, alive today and dead tomorrow,—that we feel unhappy by reason of contrast and change. Thus we might argue that if there were a complete cessation of Activity or change, life would be happy. But all that we see around us is subject to activity or change; and so this cessation of activity can exist only outside this universe. Again, if such a thing is desirable, it should be possible to imagine that it exists; and so we get a further idea of God,—a Being who is perfectly happy, who is not subject to Action or change, and who is outside the ambit of this universe.

But life itself must come to an end with the cessation of activity or change, and yet we wish to live. How then can we be happy so long as we live? or are we doomed to eternal unhappiness in life, and is death the only door of escape? How can that be? for we wish to live and be happy, and not die. Is it possible to imagine that we may live and yet be happy?—for nothing else can satisfy the human mind.

We see that certain forms of activity, such as breathing, sleeping, waking, etc., performed in the ordinary course of nature, do not make us un-

happy ; and so if *all* our actions could be performed in this way, we would not feel unhappy at all. Again, we see that if we have no personal interest whatever in our actions, if we have only done our duty, if they are meant for the benefit of all, we do not mind whether we succeed or fail, and so do not feel unhappy. Thus we see that we can live and act in this world and yet be happy, only our actions should be performed without self-interest, in the natural course of life, or as a matter of duty, and for the benefit of all. And this the ancients called Sacrifice. Whether or not it is possible for Man to attain to such perfection in Action, what is desirable can at least be imagined ; and the Being who acts in perpetual Sacrifice and is perfectly happy, though living in the universe, is God.

✓ Again, all Action is creative of some form of life ; and even where it appears to destroy, it only creates another form of life. And so we might say that God creates through Sacrifice.

Thus we see that the idea of God is co-extensive with the whole universe,—its mystery, grandeur and vastness, its splendour and might—coupled with that of an all-pervading Law, a moral order, restraint, selflessness, and Good, which the ancients described in one word as Sacrifice. So long as we regard Nature, with all its glory and magnificence, as a blind and fortuitous power, we eliminate the idea of God ; but when we associate with it the idea of Sacrifice, we transform it into God, who is both manifest and unmanifest, within and without, who is an embodiment of moral Law, characterized by restraint,

selflessness, and universal Good. He creates through Sacrifice, he lives for ever, and he is supremely happy. This is the ancient idea of God expressed in all systems of Religion.

But how does this solve the problem of life and harmonize the discoveries of Science with the teachings of Philosophy and Religion? We have observed that there are five great creative energies of life,—Super-electric energy, Heat, Electric energy, and Magnetic energy with its north and south poles. The ancients held that Magnetic energy is characteristic of Ether, which gives rise to four other elements,—Air, Fire, Water, and Earth. It is these five elements that constitute Matter as we understand it. But they believed that all life is made manifest when a higher energy is transformed into a lower one; so that it is the Super-electric energy that is transformed into Heat, and the latter into Electric energy, which again is changed into Magnetic energy with its two poles. Thus what we call Matter, the manifestation of the five elements, is itself created out of Electric energy, the latter out of Heat, which again is a transformation of what is called Super-electric energy. This agrees with the conclusions of modern Science, and in a measure anticipates what has yet to be discovered. Ether is the first of the elements, and all matter at this stage is an Atom. Beyond this is Electric energy or the Electron. Beyond this, it will be found, is Heat; and what is beyond Heat will appear to be like Electric energy of an extraordinary intensity, which may be called Super-electric.

The ancients believed that each form of life is possessed of all these five great creative energies, and in Man they correspond to his Soul, Buddhi or the power of Reason, Mind, and the Senses of Knowledge and Action. Now, if we desire to construct a system of Philosophy and Religion based on the truths of Science, it must relate to all these five great creative energies of life ; and this is what the ancients actually did.

We have explained that the ancient idea of God was Nature characterized by Sacrifice ; and so all that is true of Nature must be equally true of God, and the only way to understand the truth of Life is to understand the Law of Nature, which is God. That Philosophy, that Religion alone is true which is based on the truths of Nature and is in harmony with the idea of Sacrifice ; it alone can last for it is based on the eternal verities of Life itself. And then our conception of God becomes our ideal for Man, and the whole problem of life is solved. We wish to live and be happy, and we can do so by basing our conduct on the Law of Sacrifice, which is God.

We have observed that there are five great energies of life; and so, if we wish to examine the universe, we would do wisely to examine it from five different points of view,—in the light of the five great creative energies within and without us. The universe is so vast, and presents so varied a spectacle according to the different energies that come into play, that it is impossible to survey the whole, and it is more simple to

examine it separately in the light of its five great energies, and then generalize as to the whole.

In this connection we have observed that there are five different ways in which we can examine the problem of life as created by Nature and God. We might hold (1) that it is created by God alone, or (2) by Nature alone, or by God and Nature combined, where (3) the share of God is more than that of Nature, or where (4) the two are equal, or where (5) the share of Nature is more than that of God.

Now there are five great creative energies in the universe, corresponding to which we have five forces in Man; and then we have five different ways of examining the problem of life as created by God or Nature or the two combined. Thus, if we could construct five systems of Philosophy, bearing on these five creative energies and five points of view in regard to God and Nature, we should be able to harmonize Science with Philosophy and Religion.

This is what the ancients have done in their great systems of Philosophy and Religion—*Sankhya*, *Nyaya*, *Vaiseshika*, *Yoga*, and *Vedānta*,—and *Jainism*, *Buddhism*, *Saivism*, and *Vaishnavism*. If we examine the universe in the light of its south polar Magnetic energy or Atom in wave motion, the character of our Senses of Action, and the belief that it is Nature alone that creates, we get the *Sankhya* system of thought, *Atheism*, and the *Digambara* school of *Jainism*. If again, we examine it in the light of its north polar Magnetic energy or

Atom in elliptical motion, the character of the Senses of Knowledge, and the belief that it is Nature who mainly creates and God is either a spectator of its work or has at best but a small share in it,—we get *Nyaya*, Agnosticism, the *Svetambara* school of Jainism, and the *Hinayana* school of Buddhism. Then, if we examine it in the light of its Electric energy or Electron, the character of the Mind, and the belief that God and Nature together create all life and with equal or almost equal share,—we get the *Vaiseshika*, Dualism, the *Mahayana* school of Buddhism, and the *Dvaita* school of Saivism and Vaishnavism. Again, if we examine it in the light of its energy of Heat, the character of Buddhi, and the belief that it is God who is the chief creator of life and Nature is either a spectator of his work or has at best but a small share in it,—we get Yoga, qualified Monism, and the *Visishtadvaita* school of Saivism and Vaishnavism. Finally, if we examine it in the light of its Super-electric energy, the character of the Soul, and the belief that it is God alone who creates, we get Vedanta, pure Monism of God, and the *Advaita* school of Vaishnavism.

Then it is necessary to connect together all these systems of thought, and that gives us the sixth system of Hindu Philosophy,—*Purva Mimamsa*, commonly believed to be an introduction to Vedanta, but really a connecting link between all systems and an introduction to all of them.

Similarly the worship of Sakti is a connecting link between all systems of Religion. This has been explained in the previous Volume.



We have seen that the only difference between Nature and God is that the former is conceived as a blind and fortuitous force, while the latter is characterized by Sacrifice, understood as creative power accompanied by moral Law, goodness, selflessness, impartiality, and self-restraint. We notice that it is Sacrifice that connects together all systems of thought. The *Sankhya*, by denying a place to God, denies all Sacrifice; *Nyaya*, by giving a small place to God, admits but a small measure of Sacrifice; the *Vaisesika*, by giving a larger place to God, admits a larger measure of Sacrifice; *Yoga* accepts it still more, while *Vedanta*, by holding that it is God alone who creates, accepts nothing but Sacrifice.

It is in this way that the ancients have examined the universe from different points of view, and conceived of the solution of the problem of life from different angles, giving us different ideals of conduct in the light of each, so that we might live and act and be happy at whatever stage of evolution and development we are.

But all Philosophy is an abstraction,—an attempt to get at the essence of Truth in a mass of matter and life. But if it be really an expression of Truth, it must be related to the work-a-day life of the average man. It must make the abstract concrete again, transform the universal into the individual, the ideal into the actual, and set it before us as a guide for daily practice. This can be done through all the materials of Art,—Architecture and Sculpture, Painting, Music, and

Poetry. In other words, Philosophy must be transformed into Religion, with all its pageantry of Art,—imposing edifices and imagery, the mystery of colours and sounds, and the inspiration of Poetry, with all its beauty of form, sweetness of speech, variety and interest of narrative, personification and figures of speech, and above all sincerity and love of Truth. This too has been done by the ancients. After examining the five great systems of Philosophy separately, they combined them in sets of two and three according to their affinity and range, and constructed on them their four great systems of Religion,—Vaishnavism, Saivism, Buddhism, and Jainism, with Sakti worship as a connecting link between all. An account of this has been given in a previous Volume.

All the ancient Sacred Books of the Hindus are an attempt to embody the truths of Science in systems of Philosophy and Religion in different forms, referring them to the daily life of the average man. The gods of the Vedas personify the five great creative energies of life, separately and together, at different stages of their evolution; the Brahmanas express the same idea in terms of creative and selfless Action or Sacrifice: the Upanishads and the systems of Philosophy deal with the same subject more directly; and the Puranas and the Epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata represent them in Story form. They cover the whole range of human thought, from Physics to Metaphysics, from pure Monism of God to qualified Monism, Dualism, Agnosticism,

and Atheism ; and from the Soul of Man to his Buddhi, Mind, and the Senses of Knowledge and Action. Indeed, it would be difficult to conceive of anything outside this range, and this would explain the statement in the Mahabharata, " That which is in it, is elsewhere. That which does not occur here, occurs nowhere else. "

But this was not a mere theory or abstract speculation ; it was intended to bear on the life and conduct of the average man. All of us are not at the same stage of evolution and development. There are five great creative energies in Man, from the Soul to the Senses, and each of us has more of the one or the other specially defined. Many of us are at the stage of the Senses and see all things in their light ; others are at the Mind stage and can think ; some, however, are at the Buddhi stage, with doubts resolved and mind at peace ; while a few are at the Soul stage, ever acting in a spirit of Sacrifice, undisturbed by change, and always happy at heart. Each of us can understand the problem of life in the light of his own character and the stage of his evolution and development ; and the five systems of Philosophy and their corresponding Religions, bearing as they do on the five great creative energies of life, provide for each individual an ideal and a goal according to his peculiar point of view. The ultimate Truth is indeed one, conceived in the light of one God, one Nature, one Soul, and one Law of life, *viz.*, Sacrifice ; but we have to rise by stages to grasp this Truth. This is the peculiarly sublime character of the ancient systems of thought, giving to

each individual an ideal according to his stage of development and yet comprehending the whole. They are not complete or rival systems, as some imagine, but different stages and different landmarks in our study of the problem of life, each leading to the other, until we attain to the ultimate Truth, and view all things in the light of God and the Soul. That is Vedanta, the essence and end of all Knowledge, even as the word implies, when we see all life as perpetual Sacrifice, and the whole universe eternally happy and good.

The Mahabharata is a magnificent attempt to explain all ancient systems of Philosophy and Religion in Story form. There is, perhaps, in all literature no better way of communicating our ideas to the average man than through a Story. We are all like children in this respect, and take peculiar delight in reading or hearing Stories, and human nature has not changed since the dawn of civilization. The allegory and fable of olden times had this end in view, and we yet believe that the modern Novel may have a moral purpose too. But every student of literature knows how difficult it is to convey moral and religious truths in a continuous Story form, and the attempt of Spenser in his *Faerie Queene* proves how easy it is to fail. But the difficulties, though great, are not insurmountable, and it would be a glorious consummation of the Poet's art if he can succeed in his task.

In the very opening Chapter of the Epic we are told that it is a Story based on the Sacred Books

of the Hindus, from the Vedas to the Puranas, and has to be understood in their light; and the following pages will show how far this is literally true. The ancients brought down Philosophy and Religion from their empyrean heights to this Earth by means of their art of Story; but the process is not without danger peculiar to the method; for in the interest of the Story the original Philosophy may easily be forgotten. We have learnt to think of the Mahabharata as a Story to the exclusion of almost everything else, and it seems difficult for the average man to realize that it can be a picture of Philosophy and Religion too. No one can deny that it is an extraordinary work, conceived as a pure Story, clear and consistent from beginning to end, the narrative interesting in each part as well as the whole, and the characters all distinctly defined. Indeed, in the pure art of plot-construction, it is a marvel of the Poet's art, and there is no work to compare with it in point of volume and range in the whole world. That it is to this day the most popular of all religious Stories in India, and is daily recited in millions of homes is a tribute to the Story-teller's art; and there are many who love to think of it as a dream of India's glory in the past, a romance of love and life, an Epic of great and heroic deeds of valour and war.

That it has succeeded as a Story, no one can deny; but whether it can also be interpreted as a picture of all systems of Philosophy and Religion by means of the ancient method of Letter-analysis, the reader can, by the perusal of these

pages, judge for himself. There we see how Man can rise from Atheism and Agnosticism to pure belief in God through the idea of Sacrifice; but when he abandons this Sacrifice, he drops down to Agnosticism once more. Thus it is a complete cycle of human thought and a wonderful picture of life. In addition to this it might be many more things too,—a treatise on History and Politics, as some believe, or on Astronomy and Medicine as we are told in the Introductory Chapter of the Epic. But above all it is a picture of all systems of Philosophy and Religion, an Encyclopaedia of all knowledge of the ancients; and it offers as complete a solution of the problems of life as man can think. That was its use in the past, that is its use today, and that is likely to be its use in the time to come.

The main ideas of the ancient systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion are based fundamentally on the essential truths of Science. But there are a few points regarded as necessary in understanding these systems of thought,—the theories of Karma or Action, Incarnation, Re-birth, and Transmigration of the Soul. Karma is Action conceived in its widest significance, and is a general expression for the Law of Change and Effect and Cause that we see in the world around; and when it is said to regulate the course of life from birth to death, it is to be understood as a universal application of the same law. Incarnation is but a manifestation of the Unmanifest in various forms; and this, as we have explained (MM. I, 126-132), is the idea of the ten Incarnations of

Vishnu in the world. Re-birth is nothing but continuity of Life, conceived as imperishable, where Death is regarded but as a change of energy and form; while Transmigration expresses the idea of unity in diversity, holding that the same energy (*viz.*, the Soul) may assume different forms and make itself manifest in different ways. These are all wonderful speculations, super-imposed on the more scientific conceptions of the ancients which form the basis of their systems of Philosophy and Religion; and, though they are logical and consistent in content and form, and bear on the great truths of life as the ancients understood them, they must not be mixed up with the more fundamental ideas in regard to the problems of the universe. All Knowledge is from the known to the unknown, and the ancients never lost sight of this Truth. They studied, observed, and examined Nature or the world of the known, and then, on its analogy, built their theories and speculations regarding the unknown. But they always remembered that the Unknown is the Unmanifest, beyond the range of the Known, about which we can only speculate. Things are unmanifest at their source and end, and only a brief span of the manifest bridges the two eternities at the extremes; and about these we can only think, imagine, or dream. And there is nothing in all literature grander than the hymn of the Rig Veda regarding the origin and end of things:—"Who verily knows, and who can here declare it, whence it was born, and whence comes this creation? The Gods are later than the world's production; who knows then whence it first came

into being? He, the first origin of this creation, whether he formed it all or did not form it, whose eye controls this world in highest heaven, he verily knows it or perhaps he knows not!" (MM. I, 279). "Or perhaps He knows not!" such was the exclamation of the Poet regarding God himself. How is it possible for Man to *know* the eternal beginning or the eternal end of life? He can only speculate, imagine or dream; but these speculations, theories and dreams are as near allied to reality as it is possible to conceive.

I have thought it necessary to give the Story of the Mahabharata in as complete a detail as possible, so that the reader may be able to judge for himself whether the explanation, equally detailed and covering all important points, is consistent throughout, and the Epic a picture of all systems of Philosophy and Religion. This is as necessary for the reader as the writer, for the object of both is not ingenuity of explanation but Truth, and the work must stand and fall as a whole. If the Mahabharata is really a picture of Philosophy and Religion, then it follows that all Sacred Books of the Hindus, from the Vedas to the Puranas, are of the same character, and must be re-interpreted to be properly understood. The effect of this on our present ideas and theories would be difficult to describe. The wisdom of the East has always had a message for the world, and perhaps the need for it is greater than ever today. And nowhere can we understand the fundamental unity of all Life,—in Science, Philosophy and Religion,—equally applicable to the wisdom of the sage and



the humblest task of the average man—as we find in the Sacred Books of the Hindus. All the great Religions of the world, including Christianity and Islam, tell the same tale ; only we do not understand. But a comprehensive account of all the essential problems of life, examined from all conceivable points of view, is given in the Sacred Books of the Hindus, and they need only to be re-interpreted to be understood. This need hardly cause surprise, for Sanskrit is admitted to be the oldest of all languages of the Aryan stock, Asiatic as well as European. Language is but a vehicle of thought, and what wonder if Sanskrit Philosophy and Literature, the oldest of all, can explain the secret of other languages too ? We are naturally proud of modern Science and modern civilization ; but some of the more recent archaeological discoveries have shown what a tremendous civilization existed thousands of years ago, and it is not impossible to believe that the great Religions of the world, all of which had their origin in the East, had something fundamental in them, and the reconciliation between Science, Philosophy and Religion, which we are attempting today, was accomplished in the far off past.

I do not know if all that I have written will easily be accepted as true. For centuries we have been accustomed to different ways of thought, and it seems difficult to begin again, almost anew. But the Sacred Books of the Hindus have always been believed to be mysteries of the Divine and not\* idle tales, though no one has proved them to be such so far, and it seems difficult to

imagine that any proof can be forthcoming now. Whatever might be said about speculations and theories in general, a re-interpretation of the original text, following a certain definite and well-understood method, is a matter of fact, not faith; and nothing is more easy than to come to a conclusion whether it is correct or not. The present interpretation of the Mahābhārata is based on the ancient method of Letter-analysis, known to all students of Sanskrit, but never before applied on so large a scale; and it should not be difficult for the reader to decide for himself whether it is correctly done or not. But if what I have written fail to convince, I trust that others may succeed along this or some other path. If it but stimulate a fuller and closer study of the Sacred Books, the present task will have been more than amply repaid.

In conclusion I take this opportunity of thanking those who have assisted me in correcting proofs. Professor M. N. Tolani of D. G. National College, Hyderabad Sind, corrected the proofs of the first Volume, and Mr. B. B. Gupta and Pundit N. N. Chaudhri of Ramjas College, Delhi, did those of the remaining Volumes. I am very grateful to the learned Pundit for looking through the MSS. of the fourth Volume and making valuable suggestions.

N. V. T.

1st. May, 1934.

# PART I

## THE STORY OF THE EPIC



# I. ADI PARVA

## CHAPTER I

### THE BIRTH OF HEROES

#### I. INVOCATION.

HAVING saluted *Narayana* and *Nara*, and also *Sarasvati*, let us cry "Success!"

#### 2. THE SACRIFICE OF THE SNAKE.

The wonderful stories of the *Mahabharata*, composed by *Krishna Dvaipayana (Vyasa)*, were recited by the sage *Vaisampayana* at the great Snake-sacrifice held by *Janamejaya*, the son of *Parikshit*. The *Mahabharata* is composed in beautiful language, and it includes all other works. It is explained by all *Sastras*, and contains the essence of the four *Vedas*, and is a great source of knowledge in the three worlds (I, i).

#### 3. VYASA AND GANESA.

The son of *Satyavati (Vyasa)*, after penance and meditation, having classified the four *Vedas*, composed this holy history. When he had compiled it, he began to consider how he could teach it to the people. Then *Brahma*, knowing the anxiety of the *Rishi*, appeared in person before him, and asked him to call upon *Ganesa* to write the poem. *Vyasa* thought of *Ganesa* and, as soon as he did so, *Ganesa* appeared before him. *Vyasa* requested him to become the writer of the *Bharata*, which he had

composed in his mind. *Ganesa* agreed on condition that his pen would not be made to stop even for a moment. *Vyasa* consented, and *Ganesa* proceeded to write to the dictation of *Vyasa* (I, 1).

#### 4. THE CHARACTER OF THE MAHABHARATA.

The wisdom of this work, like the stick used for applying collyrium, has opened the eyes of the world. The whole house of the womb of Nature is properly and completely lighted up by the lamp of this history which destroys the darkness of ignorance. The eternal *Vasudeva* (*Krishna*) is described in it, as also the eternal *Brahma*, from whom has been produced the non-existent and existent-non-existent universe, with the principle of reproduction and progression, birth, death, and re-birth (I, i). That which is in it is elsewhere. That which does not occur here, occurs nowhere else. This history is known by the name of *Jaya*. It should be heard by every one desirous of liberation (XVIII, v).

Some read the *Bharata* from the first Mantra ; some from the story of *Astika* ; some again from *Uparichara* ; while some *Brahmanas* read the whole (I, i).

We shall begin from the story of *Uparichara*.

#### 5. THE STORY OF UPARICHARA.

There was a king named *Uparichara*. He was also called *Vasu*. He ruled over the kingdom of *Chedi*, was engaged in practising austerities, and worshipped *Indra*, the lord of the celestials. He was married to *Girika* ; but one day, when he was filled with desire, *Girika* was not to be found. Then, as he was

sitting under a tree, his seminal fluid came out. A hawk carried it away, but it fell into the waters of the Yamuna. There lived in the Yamuna an *Apsara*, named *Adrikā*, who dwelt there in the form of a fish, and she swallowed it. As a result of this she had two children, a boy and a girl. The former became that virtuous and powerful monarch, named *Matsya*; and the latter, a girl of sweet smiles, was known by the name of *Satyavati* (I, lxiii).

#### 6. SATYAVATI AND VYASA.

*Satyavati* was left by the king with the fishermen, where she had a son by the *Rishi Parasara*, and yet retained her virginity. The boy adopted asceticism from his very birth, and went away, saying, "As soon as I am remembered by you on any occasion, I shall appear before you." Thus was born *Vyasa*, the compiler of the four Vedas, and the author of the fifth, the *Mahābhārata* (I, lxiii).

#### 7. THE COURT OF BRAHMA : MAHABHISHA AND GANGA.

There was born a king in the race of *Ikshvaku*, and he was known by the name of *Mahābhisha*. He was a lord of the world, and truly powerful; and after performing many *Asvamedha* and *Rajasuya* sacrifices, had ascended to heaven (I, xcvi).

THE CURSE OF BRAHMA.—Once upon a time the celestials were worshipping *Brahma*, and *Mahābhisha* was also present there. There came also the queen of rivers, *Gangā*, to pay adorations to the Grandsire (*Brahma*). Her garments were blown away by the wind, and the royal sage, *Mahābhisha*, gazed and stared at her, and for this he was cursed by *Brahma*, who said, "You will be born

on earth, and then again attain to these regions." The king then wished to be born as the son of the powerful monarch Pratīpa (I, cxvi).

GANGA AND THE EIGHT VASUS.—Ganga also went away, thinking of the king in her mind. She saw on her way the eight Vasus, who were sad at heart for they had been cursed by Vasishtha and told that they would be born as men. They begged Ganga to make them her sons by becoming a woman on earth, and wished to be born in the house of Pratīpa, and to have his new son (Mahābhīsha) for their father. Ganga agreed, and then they asked her to throw them into water as soon as they were born, so that they might not have to live long on the earth. Ganga consented on condition that at least one of them should live. They agreed to give each an eighth part of their energies, from which should be born a son who would live; but he was to remain childless for ever, and not to beget any children. After this arrangement, the Vasus went their way (I, xcvi).

#### 8. PRATIPA AND GANGA.

There was a king named Pratīpa. He had spent many years in penance, and went to the source of the river Ganga. One day the beautiful and accomplished Ganga rose from the waters in the form of a woman, and came to the king. She sat upon his right thigh, and offered herself to him. But she had chosen a seat meant for daughters and daughters-in-law; and so the king accepted her as a wife for his son. Ganga agreed and then disappeared (I, xcvi).



## 9. SANTANU.

Time passed, and Pratipa had a son. He was Mahabhisha, and came to be called Santanu. When he grew up to be a youth, Pratipa told him how a celestial damsel had appeared before him, and enjoined him, if he should meet her, to accept her as his wife, and judge not the propriety or impropriety of what she did. He then installed Santanu on the throne and retired into a forest (I, xcvi).

## 10. SANTANU AND GANGA.

Santanu was fond of hunting; and one day, wandering along the banks of the Ganga, he met a lovely damsel of blazing beauty, like Sri herself. They were both filled with rapture at each other's sight, and the king begged her to become his wife. Ganga,—for it was she,—agreed on condition that the king would not interfere in any of her acts, whether agreeable or disagreeable to him, saying, "So long as you act in this way, I shall live with you; but I shall leave you as soon as you interfere with me or speak harsh words to me." The king accepted this condition and they both lived together in great happiness (I, xcvi).

## 11. BHISHMA OR DYAU.

Santanu had eight sons by Ganga, and they were all like the celestials. But as soon as they were born, she threw them into the river, and the king could not complain for fear of losing her. When the eighth son was born and Ganga was ready to throw it into water, the king, filled with sorrow, begged her to spare it, saying, "Who

are you? Why do you kill your own sons? Murderess of your sons, you are committing great sins by your acts." Hearing this, Ganga spared the child, saying, "As you desire for a son, I shall not kill this child. You have become the foremost of fathers. But there must be an end to my stay with you according to our agreement. I am Ganga, the daughter of Jalmu; and these sons were the eight celestial Vasus, who had to assume human form as the result of the curse of Vasishtha, the son of Varuna, and known by the name of Apava,—for attempting to steal his cow. I alone could be their mother, and for that purpose assumed a human form; and I had promised that I would free them from birth as soon as they were born. I must leave you now. Rear this child of rigid vows, and let him be known by the name of Gangadatta (given by Ganga). He is Dyaus and, by the curse of the Rishi, has to remain long on the earth. He will abstain from the pleasures of women, and will not beget any offspring at all." (I, xcix-c.)

Having said this, the goddess disappeared. She took her son with herself; and after many years, during which he studied all the Vedas with Vasishtha, and understood the use of all the weapons known to Parasurama, the great bowman, she restored him to his father as an expert in all weapons belonging to heaven and earth (I, c).

## 12. SANTANU AND SATYAVATI.

Santanu was a virtuous and accomplished king, and lived happily with his son. One day he went to a forest on the banks of the river Yamuna,

and perceived a sweet smell coming from an unknown direction. Proceeding further, he saw a maiden of celestial beauty, belonging to the fishermen class. Enraptured by her beauty, the king went to her (adoptive) father and asked her hand in marriage. The chief of fishermen agreed on condition that the son born of the girl should be installed on the throne. But the king had already a son, and so he could not consent to this, and returned to his city, Hastinapura, thinking of the fisherman's daughter, with his heart sore afflicted by desire (I, c).

His son Gangadatta, finding him sad at heart, came to him and inquired about the cause of his grief. Then an old minister, devoted to his father's welfare, told him all about the pledge regarding the maiden. Thereupon the prince went to the chief of the fishermen and begged his daughter for his father, promising to relinquish his own title to the throne, so that the son of his daughter might rule as king; and he took a vow of celibacy so that no child might be born to him to dispute the claim. The fisherman then agreed to give his daughter in marriage to the king, and Gangadatta came to be known as Bhishma (the terrible), because of the vow he had taken. The prince then took the maiden in his chariot and brought her to Hastinapura to be his father's queen (I, c).

### 13. CHITRANGADA AND VICHITRAVIRYA.

Santanu lived happily with his wife Satyawati; and after a time a son, named Chitrangada, was born to him. Then he got another son, named

Vichitravīrya, and soon after that Santanu passed away (I, ci).

Chitrāṅgada was a powerful prince, and he became king after his father. But a great Gandharva chief made war on him. A fearful combat took place between them on the field of Kurukshetra, on the banks of the Sarasvatī, in which that best of Kurus (Chitrāṅgada) was killed by the Gandharva through his *Maya* (I, ci).

#### 14. AMBA, AMBIKA, AMBALIKA.

After the death of Chitrāṅgada Bhīṣma placed Vichitravīrya on the throne of the kingdom; and, when the young king had attained maturity, thought of marrying him. He heard that the three daughters of the king of Kasi would be married at a Svayamvara (choice of a husband); and so, riding in his chariot, he came to the city of Kasi. He saw the three maidens and chose them for the prince; and, holding that a wife taken by force amidst an assemblage of kings was most highly prized, placed them in his car, and carried them away. The assembled kings and princes rose in anger against him and pursued him, but he defeated them all, and came with the maidens to Hastināpura (I, cii).

After consulting Satyawatī, he began to make preparations for his brother's marriage, when Amba, the eldest daughter of the king of Kasi, informed him that she had chosen in her heart the king of Saubha as her husband, and he too had accepted her in his heart as his wife; and she would have chosen him as her husband in the Svayamvara. Hearing this, Bhīṣma allowed her to do as she desired.

He then bestowed the two princesses, *Ambika* and *Ambalika*, on his brother *Vichitravirya* according to the ordained rites (I, cii).

*Vichitravirya* lived with his wives for seven years, and then he was attacked with consumption and passed away, plunging every one in sorrow and grief (I, cii.)

### 15. THE NIYOGA OF VYASA.

*Satyavati* was now plunged in anxiety for the continuance of the Kuru race. She begged *Bhishma* to marry the two wives of his brother and get offspring, but he had taken a vow of celibacy and could not break it. So *Kali* (*Satyavati*) thought of her son *Vyasa*, otherwise known as *Krishna Dvaipayana*,—*Krishna* because he was black, and *Dvaipayana* because he was born on an island. As soon as he was remembered, *Vyasa* appeared before her; and *Satyavati* asked him, for the sake of perpetuating the line of *Santanu* and the protection of the people, to beget sons on the two wives of *Vichitravirya*. *Vyasa* consented, saying that he would produce sons that would be like *Yama* and *Varuna* (I, ciii-cv).

### 16. DHRITARASHTRA, PANDU AND VIDURA.

Then because *Ambika* closed her eyes for fear of his ugliness, the son born, though equal to a thousand elephants in strength, and known as *Dhritarashtra* in after years, was blind. The second princess, *Ambalika*, grew pale with fear at his sight, and so the son born was pale in complexion and called *Pandu*. *Vyasa* also begot on a maid-servant, a *Sudra* woman, a son who was known in after years

as Vidura, an incarnation of Dharma, the god of Justice (I, cvi).

#### 17. THE MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCES.

Dhritarashtra, *Pandu* and Vidura were brought up by Bhishma as if they were his own sons. They engaged themselves in study and vows, and grew into accomplished youths, learned in the Vedas, expert in archery, skilled in the use of arms, well versed in history, and proficient in the science of morality. Of the three *Pandu* became king, for Dhritarashtra was born blind, and Vidura was born of a *Sudra* woman (I, cix).

#### 18. GANDHARI.

Bhishma succeeded in obtaining the hand of princess *Gandhari*, the daughter of Subala, in marriage for Dhritarashtra; and she, because her husband was blind, bandaged her own eyes out of love and respect for him. Sakuni, her brother, brought her to Hastinapura, where she was married to Dhritarashtra and had a hundred sons and one daughter by him. Bhishma obtained for Vidura the daughter of king Devaka by a *Sudra* wife, and he had many children as graceful and accomplished as himself (I, cx).

#### 19. ONE HUNDRED SONS OF DHRITARASHTRA.

*Gandhari* had been favoured with a boon by Vyasa that she should have a hundred sons. But instead of children she brought forth a hard mass of flesh like an iron ball. Thereupon Vyasa, who was called to help, sprinkled the ball with cold water, when it divided into a hundred and one

parts. They were put into jars filled with clarified butter or *ghee*; and out of them were born in time a hundred sons and one daughter. Duryodhana was the eldest of all, and the daughter's name was *Duhsala* (I,cxv-cxvi).

## 20. THE STORY OF KUNTI.

There was a chief among the Yadus, named *Sura*, who was the father of *Vasudeva*. He had a daughter, named *Pritha*. He gave his first born child to his childless cousin, *Kuntibhoja*, and so she came to be called *Kunti* (I,cxi).

## 21. THE BIRTH OF KARNA.

While living in her (adoptive) father's house, she had been taught a *Mantra* (invocation) by a *Brahmana*, by reciting which she could call any of the celestials to have children by him. *Kunti*, curious to know the efficacy of the charm, invoked in her maidenhood the god *Arka* (Sun); and of her union with him was born a hero, encased in a natural armour, with a face brightened by ear-rings, known all over the world by the name of *Karna*. Then the Sun, after giving back to *Pritha* her maidenhood, went away to heaven, and *Kunti* threw her powerful son into water (I,cxi).

*Karna* was taken up by *Adhiratha*, the illustrious husband of *Radha*, and brought up by them as their son. He grew in strength and became expert in the use of arms. He used to worship the Sun until his back was scorched with its rays; and when he was engaged in his worship, there was nothing on earth that he would not give to the *Brahmanas* (I, cxi).

## 22. PRITHA AND PANDU.

*Pritha* was a beautiful, accomplished and virtuous maiden; and, placing the nuptial garland round the neck of *Pandu*, chose him for her husband at her *Svayamvara*. Their wedding rites were duly performed, and *Pandu* brought her to his capital as his queen (I, cxii).

## 23. THE MARRIAGE OF MADRI.

After some time *Bhishma* thought of marrying *Pandu* to a second wife, and went to the capital of *Salya*, the king of *Madra*, to ask for the hand of his sister, *Madri*, for the king. *Salya* demanded a tribute in return, as it was a custom of his race. *Bhishma* agreed, and he gave his sister in marriage to *Pandu*. *Bhishma* brought her to *Hastinapura*, where she was married to *Pandu* in due form (I, cxiii).

## 24. THE FIVE SONS OF PANDU.

*Pandu* lived happily for a time with his two wives, and was honoured by all and acknowledged as the only hero on earth. But thereafter, having mastered his senses, he retired into a forest with *Kunti* and *Madri* (I, cxiv).

One day, while roaming in the forest, *Pandu* shot a deer in company with its mate; and the deer, who was a *Rishi* in that guise, cursed him, saying, "As you have killed me, so will death overtake you as soon as you feel the influence of desire." Thereupon *Pandu* adopted the vow of *Brahmacharya*, practised great asceticism together with his wives, and lived in the forest in the company of *Siddhas* and great *Rishis* (I, cxviii-cxix).



One day *Pandu* was filled with a desire to see the self-created *Brahma*; but realizing that there was no heaven for the sonless, he wished to have sons. But having lost his power of procreation, he begged *Kunti* to assist. *Kunti* then bethought her of the *Brahmana's Mantra* and, at the request of her husband, wished god *Dharma* to give her an offspring. So by him was born the eldest son of *Pandu*, *Yudhishthira* the truthful. Again, at the bidding of her husband, she invoked *Vayu*, and by him was born *Bhima*, the foremost among the *Kshatriyas*, whose body was hard as the thunder-bolt. On the day of his birth *Duryodhana* was also born to *Gandhari* (I, cxxiii).

Desirous of yet another son, *Pandu* asked *Kunti* to invoke *Indra*, the lord of the celestials; and of him was born *Arjuna*, possessed of great soul, effulgent as the sun, in splendour like *Indra*, and like *Vishnu* himself (I, cxxiii).

*Pandu* was desirous of still more sons. But *Madri*, who regarded herself as superior to *Kunti* by birth, though inferior to her in station, was childless; and so *Kunti*, at *Pandu's* request and *Madri's* desire, thought of the two *Asvins* for her; and by them were born of *Madri* the twins, *Nakula* and *Sahadeva*, matchless in energy and beauty on earth. Thus were born to *Pandu* five sons begotten by the celestials and endued with great strength (I, cxxiv).

## 25. THE DEATH OF PANDU AND MADRI.

Seeing his five sons before him, *Pandu* felt that his old strength of arms had come back to him;

and one day he was overpowered by desire for his wife *Madri*. And so the curse of the *Rishi* in the deer's guise fell on him, and he died. *Kunti*, being the eldest of his wives, desired to follow her lord in death ; but at the entreaties of *Madri* allowed her (*Madri*) to ascend the funeral pyre of the king (I, cxxv).

Then the *Rishis* who dwelt with the king in the mountains, took the remains of *Pandu* and *Madri* ; and, with *Kunti* and the five children, started for the city of *Hastinapura*, to place them in the hands of *Dhritarashtra* and *Bhishma*. They reached the capital, and told them all about the birth of the five princes. The heart of every one was filled with sorrow and grief ; and the last rites over the remains of *Pandu* and *Madri* were then performed by *Vidura* at the command of *Dhritarashtra* (I, cxxvi-cxxvii).

## 26. THE DEATH OF SATYAVATI AND AMBALIKA.

When the ceremonies had ended, *Vyasa* comforted his bereaved and afflicted mother *Satyavati*, and advised her to devote herself to *Yoga* meditation. Then she, with the mother of *Pandu*, retired into a forest with the permission of *Bhishma* and, after performing severe austerities, they passed away and ascended to heaven (I, cxxviii).

The sons of *Pandu* grew up in royal style in the house of their father, and soon excelled the sons of *Dhritarashtra* in sports and feats of strength (I, cxxviii).

## 27. THE STORY OF KRIPA.

There was a great Rishi, by name Gautama, and he had a son by name Saradvat, who was a great ascetic. One day he saw a celestial *Apsara* of matchless beauty, clad in a single piece of cloth, and his eyes wandered in joy at her sight. His body trembled, causing an emission of his vital fluid which, falling on a clump of heath, divided into two parts, whence sprang two children, who were twins. A soldier of king Santanu saw them and brought them to the king, who was filled with pity at the sight, and so gave them the names of Kripa and Kripī. They were brought up by him, and Kripa became proficient in all branches of science and arms and other kinds of knowledge. The sons of Dhritarashtra, Pandu, and other princes came to study with him (I, cxxx).

## 28. THE STORY OF DRONA.

There lived at the source of the Ganga a great and high-souled Rishi, who was known as Bharadvaja. One day, as he went to the Ganges to offer oblations, he saw the *Apsara* Ghritachi rising from the waters. As she rose, her cloth became loose, at which the Rishi was filled with desire. His mind was attracted to her, and his vital fluid dropped. But he held it in a Drona (water vessel), out of which was born a child who came to be known as Drona, for he was born out of Drona or a water vessel. Drona was well versed in the Vedas and Vedangas, and became foremost of all wielders of arms (I, cxxxi).

## 29. ASVATTHAMAN.

Drona was married to Kṛipī, the sister of Kṛipā, and they had a son named Asvatthaman (I, cxxxi).

## 30. DRUPADA.

Bharadvāja had a friend, named Prishata, who was a king, and he had a son named Drupada. Drona and Drupada studied and played together; and when Prishata died, Drupada became king of the northern Panchalas (I, cxxxi).

Bharadvāja also passed away, and Drona continued to dwell in the hermitage, engaged in ascetic austerities. He learnt the science of arms from Parasurama, and received all his weapons from him (I, cxxxi).

## 31. DRONA AND DRUPADA.

One day Drona went to king Drupada, but the latter refused to recognise him as his friend. Drona was filled with anger at this and, making up his mind as to his course of action, went to the city of the Kurus, Hastinapura (I, cxxxii).

## 32. DRONA AS TEACHER OF THE PRINCES.

Arrived at Hastinapura, he stayed in the house of Kṛipā; but his fame in the science of arms soon spread and reached the ears of Bhishma, who appointed him as a preceptor of the Kaurava and Pandava princes. Many other princes also, including Karna, came to him to learn the science of arms. Karna, jealous of Arjuna, always defied that prince as well as the other Pandavas, and was supported by Duryodhana in this (I, cxxxiii).

## 33. THE PROFICIENCY OF THE PRINCES.

Though Drona gave equal instruction to all, Arjuna became the foremost in skill. Drona taught him the art of fighting on horseback, on elephant, on car, and on the ground; and he taught him to fight with club, sword, lance, spear, and the dart; and showed him the use of many other weapons. Duryodhana and Bhīma became great experts in club-fighting, and were jealous of each other. Asvatthaman excelled all in the mysteries of the science of arms; while the twins, Nakula and Sahadeva, excelled every one in handling the sword, and Yudhishthira became the best of car-warriors. Arjuna surpassed all in intelligence and skill in arms, and Drona gave him an irresistible weapon, *Brahmasira*, and showed him the method of hurling and recalling it (I, cxxxiv).

## 34. THE TOURNAMENT.

The education of the princes having been completed, Drona desired that they should show their skill in arms; and so the mighty princes, equipped with bows, arrows, and finger protectors, entered the arena of fight. They showed their skill in riding and managing swift horses and in feats of archery. Then Bhīma and Duryodhana entered the lists, and circled round fighting with their clubs. The contest was an equal one, and great excitement and enthusiasm prevailed among the spectators at the sight; and the heroes were stopped from further trial of strength by Asvatthaman, the son of Drona (I, cxxxv-cxxxvii).

Then, at the command of Drona, Arjuna appear-

ed in the arena to show his skill. He created Fire by the *Agneya* weapon; by the *Varuna* weapon he created Water; he created Wind by the *Vayava* weapon; and by the *Parjanya* weapon he created the clouds. He created Land by the *Bhauṃa* weapon, and mountains by the *Parvatyā* weapon; and by the *Antardhama* weapon he made them all to disappear. Then he showed his skill in arms with the sword, bow, and club, and all the spectators were amazed at the sight (I, cxxxvii).

### 35. KARNA AND ARJUNA.

But when the tournament was almost ended, Karna, the son of Kunti and the Sun, entered the lists and, with the permission of Drona, displayed all the feats that Arjuna had shown before, and longed for a single combat with that prince. The two then displayed their skill; but, as a real trial in arms could take place only between equals, Duryodhana installed Karna as the king of Anga on the spot, and thereby secured him for a friend and ally for ever. But at this time the Sun went down and the tournament came to a close. Some named Arjuna, some Karna, some Duryodhana as the victor of the day; and even Yudhishthira was impressed with the belief that there was no warrior like Karna on earth (I, cxxxviii-cxxxix).

### 36. THE DEFEAT OF DRUPADA.

After completing the education of the *Pandava* princes, Drona claimed his preceptor's gift (*Dakshina*) that they should seize the king of Panchala (Drupada), and bring him before the preceptor. The Kaurava and *Pandava* brothers went out on this

mission together with Karna. But, with the permission of Drona, Arjuna and his brothers waited till the others had shown their strength. King Drupada came out to fight and afflicted the Kaurava army, till they broke and fled, wailing towards the *Pandavas*. Then Arjuna asked Yudhishthira not to engage in battle. He appointed Nakula and Sahadeva as the protectors of his chariot wheels, and, accompanied by Bhima, rushed out to the fight. They attacked the Panchala forces, headed by the king himself, and defeated them; and Dhananjaya (Arjuna) seized Drupada and brought him before the preceptor. Then Drona reminded the king of the insult he had received when he had refused to recognise him as a friend; but he forgave him, and, dividing his kingdom into two halves, kept the northern part for himself, and returned the part on the southern side of the *Bhagirathi* to the humbled king (I, cxi).

King Drupada thereafter ruled over the southern Panchala; and, convinced that he could not defeat Drona by Kshatriya might alone,—and he was inferior to him (Drona) in Brahma power,—he wandered over the earth to find the means of obtaining a son (I, cxi).

### 37. YUDHISHTHIRA AS HEIR APPARENT: BHIMA AND BALARAMA.

After the expiration of a year, Yudhishthira was installed as heir apparent to the throne. Bhima began to receive lessons from Sankarshana (Balarama, the brother of *Krishna*) in sword-fight,

club-fight and car-fight. Arjuna became famous for his skill in arms, and Drona said that there was no one in the world equal to him (Arjuna); and, for a preceptor's gift, he made him promise to fight with him (Drona) when called upon by Drona to do so (I, cxli).



## CHAPTER II

### THE HOUSE OF LAC

#### 38. THE HOSTILITY OF KAURAVAS.

SEEING the great power of the *Pandavas*, king *Dhritarashtra's* mind became suddenly poisoned against them; and *Sakuni*, *Duryodhana*, his brother *Duhsasana*, and *Karna* resolved, with the permission of *Dhritarashtra*, to burn them to death along with their mother *Kunti* (I, cxli-cxliii).

#### 39. VIDURA TO THE RESCUE.

The wise and learned *Vidura* came to know of their intentions; and, desirous of helping the *Pandavas*, informed them of their danger. Procuring a boat, he sent *Kunti* and her sons across the *Ganga*; and they entered a forest, taking with them all the wealth they could (I, cxliii).

#### 40. THE HOUSE OF LAC.

Finding that they had escaped, *Duryodhana*, *Karna*, and *Sakuni* sought various means to cause their death. They contrived that *Dhritarashtra* should send them to the city of *Varanavata*, where they themselves desired to go, and where the people were celebrating the festival of *Pasupata* (*Siva*); and *Duryodhana* sent his counsellor *Purochana* to build in that city a House of Lac, covered with hemp, oil, *ghee*, and other inflammable material, and charged him to entice into it *Kunti* and her

sons, and to burn them to death. But Vidura, who knew of Duryodhana's designs, instructed Yudhishthira in the Mlechchha language to be on guard, and the latter understood (I, cxliii-cxlvii).

#### 41. IN THE HOUSE OF LAC.

When Kunti and her sons came to the city of Varanavata, they were royally welcomed by the citizens; and after they had lived there for ten nights, Purochana took them to his House of Lac. But they saw that it was made of inflammable material; and, understanding the design of Purochana, made a subterranean passage out from their room. In this they were assisted by a man sent by Vidura to help them, and he informed them that Purochana would set fire to the door of their house on the fourteenth night of the dark fortnight (I, cxlviii).

#### 42. THE BURNING OF THE HOUSE.

One night, on the occasion of an almsgiving, Kunti fed a large number of Brahmanas; and, impelled by fate, a Nishada woman with her five sons also came there, and slept away in the house for the night. When all the people were asleep, Bhîma set fire to the house; and the Pandavas, with their mother, entered the subterranean passage and escaped. The wicked-minded Purochana was himself burnt to death, and so also the Nishada woman and her sons; and the people thought for the moment that it was Kunti and her sons who had perished (I, cl).

#### 43. ACROSS THE GANGA.

Vidura, who knew what would happen, had

sent his man with a boat; and he took the *Pandavas* and rowed them across the *Ganga* (I, cli).

#### 44. KUNTI IS THIRSTY.

Led by *Bhīma*, the *Pandavas* entered a forest; and, afflicted with hunger and thirst and heavy with sleep, they lay down to rest. As *Kuntī* was burning with thirst, *Bhīma* went out in search of water (I, cliii).

#### 45. HIRIMBA.

Not far from the place where they lay, there was a *Rakshasa*, by name *Hirimba*, who lived with his sister *Hidimba*. Filled with desire for their blood, he sent his sister round to see them; but, when she saw *Bhīma*, her heart was filled with love. Then the *Rakshasa* came there himself and, seeing *Bhīma* and his sister together, attacked *Bhīma*. But that hero soon dashed him to the ground and put him to death (I, cliv-clvi).

#### 46. BHĪMA AND HIDIMBA : GHATOTKACHA.

Thereupon *Hidimba* claimed *Bhīma* for her husband; and, with the permission of *Kuntī* and *Yudhishthira*, that hero took that slender lady of mind-like speed to wife. She took him away with herself, promising to bring him back to them when they desired; and sported with him in the most picturesque mountain haunts and sylvan streams on the banks of the *Manasa* lake. There she gave birth to a son, energetic and mighty-armed; but he had nothing human in him, though born of a man. As his head was like a water pot (*Ghata*), they called him *Ghatotkacha* (I, clvi-clvii).

Then Hidimba, knowing that her period of stay with the *Pandava* had come to an end, went away; and Ghatotkacha went away too, promising to come when required; and Bhima returned to his mother and brothers. That great warrior, Ghatotkacha, was created by the illustrious Indra as an opponent of Karna, to withstand the weapon he had given him (I, clvi-clvii).

#### 47. VAKA.

The *Pandavas* lived in the forest for some time, and then, at the bidding of Vyasa, they went to the city of Ekachakra, where Bhima killed the Rakshasa Vaka, and saved the city from his terror (I, clix-clxvi).

## CHAPTER III

### THE MARRIAGE OF DRAUPADI

#### 48. THE SACRIFICE OF DRUPADA.

THE *Pandavas* lived in the house of a *Brahmana* and studied the Vedas with him ; and he told them of the wonderful *Svayamvara* (choice of a husband) of the daughter of *Yajnasena* (*Drupada*), the princess of *Panchala*, and the story of the birth of *Dhrishtadyumna* and *Sikhandin* and *Draupadi*, born, not of a woman, but from the sacrifice of king *Drupada* (I, clxvii).

#### 49. THE BIRTH OF DHIRISHTADYUMNA.

King *Drupada*, desirous of wreaking vengeance on *Drona*, wished to have children, and performed a great sacrifice. Then out of the flames of the sacrificial fire rose a boy, bright like a celestial, and a voice from the sky cried, " This prince has been born for the destruction of *Drona*." He was called *Dhrishtadyumna*, and the illustrious *Drona* brought him to his own house, and taught him the use of all weapons even though he knew what was to happen to him (I, clxix).

#### 50. THE BIRTH OF DRAUPADI OR KRISHNA.

Then from the flames rose a daughter, called *Panchalî*. She was beautiful, her complexion was dark, and a sweet fragrance of the blue lotus was

emitted from her body; and at her birth a celestial voice cried, "This best of women will be the cause of the destruction of the Kshatriyas." She was called *Krishna*, because her complexion was dark (I, clxix).

#### 51. DHAUMYA.

Having heard this story of the *Brahmana*, the sons of *Kuntī* were filled with a desire to see *Panchala*. Placing their mother at their head, they proceeded in a northerly direction; and, after visiting a number of shrines, came to the hermitage of *Dhaumya*, a *Brahmana* acquainted with the mystery of the *Vedas* (I, clxx-clxxxv).

#### 52. THE POTTER'S HOUSE.

They then installed *Dhaumya* as their priest; and, disguised as *Brahmanas*, proceeded to southern *Panchala* to see *Draupadi*. They joined a band of *Brahmanas* going there to witness the *Svayamvara* of the princess; and, arriving in the city, they stayed in a potter's house and lived on alms as befitted poor *Brahmanas* (I, clxxxvi).

#### 53. THE TEST.

*Yajnasena*, the father of *Draupadi*, always cherished the desire of bestowing his daughter *Krishna* on *Arjuna*; and so he caused a very stiff bow to be made, which was incapable of being bent by any one save *Arjuna*. He caused some machinery to be erected in the sky, and set up a mark above it, declaring that whoso would string the bow and shoot the mark with ornamented arrows, would obtain his daughter *Draupadi* for wife (I, clxxxvii).

## 54. KRISHNA RECOGNISES THE PANDAVAS.

Many illustrious princes came to the Svayamvara, and among them were Duryodhana and Karna. Krishna also came there with Balarama. A large concourse of people had gathered to witness the scene, and the Pandavas sat in the arena with the Brahmanas; and, as they sat there, Krishna recognised them. Then Draupadi, attired in princely robes and adorned with ornaments entered there, carrying in her hand a golden dish, on which were placed a garland of flowers and other offerings. Then, in the midst of the assembly, Dhrishtadyumna, taking hold of his sister's arm, declared, "Hear, O ye assembled kings! This is the bow, this the mark, and these the arrows. Shoot the mark through the orifice of the machine; and he who, possessing noble birth, beauty, and strength, will perform this feat, will obtain today for wife my sister Krishna." He then recited to his sister the names, the lineage and achievements of the assembled princes, saying, "These, O blessed maiden, have come for your hand, and will try to shoot the mark. Choose from among them for your husband him who is able to do so." (I, clxxxvii-clxxxviii.)

## 55. SHOOTING THE MARK: KARNA'S ATTEMPT.

Then many princes and heroes attempted to shoot the mark but in vain. When, however, the great kings and princes had failed, Karna went up and quickly raised the bow and, stringing it, placed an arrow on the string; but Draupadi cried out, "I shall not choose a Suta for my husband." And so Karna retired in shame (I, clxxxix).

## 56. THE SUCCESS OF ARJUNA.

When all the kings had failed in their attempt to string the bow, Arjuna rose from among the *Brahmanas*, and walking round the bow in due form, and bowing to *Mahadeva* and remembering *Krishna* in his mind, he raised the bow, and, stringing it in the twinkling of an eye, took up the five arrows, and shot the mark through the orifice and brought it to the ground. King *Drupada* was delighted at the deed, and the heart of *Krishna* (*Draupadi*) was filled with joy; and so she came to the son of *Kunti* with a white robe and a garland of flowers; and among those who rejoiced was the great *Krishna*, the son of *Vasudeva*, who was present on that day. He greeted Arjuna, and offered him all assistance in case of need (I,cxc).

## 57. THE WIFE OF FIVE.

After the event was over, *Bhima* and Arjuna, accompanied by *Draupadi*, returned to the potter's house, and came to their mother, and represented *Yajnaseni* (*Draupadi*) to her as the alms they had received that day. *Kunti*, not knowing what they meant, replied, "Enjoy all of you what you have obtained;" but when she understood, her words were beyond recall; and so *Draupadi* was to be the wife of all her five sons (I, cxcii).

*Drupada*, when he came to know who the princes were, was greatly pleased; but when he heard that *Draupadi* was to become the wife of all the five brothers, he felt sad at heart, and thought that it would be a sinful act, opposed to both custom and the *Vedas*. But, as he was doubting and



debating in his mind, the illustrious Vyasa appeared before him ; and, taking him aside, told him of the mysterious significance of Draupadi's marriage with the five brothers, informing him that, as Arjuna was a portion of Indra, Draupadi was celestial Lakshmi herself. And so the king was satisfied and consented. Then was Draupadi married to all the five *Pandava* brothers ; but the high-souled lady still regained her virginity day after day (I, cxcvii-cc).

#### 58. THE PANDAVAS AT HOME.

When king Dhritarashtra came to know that the *Pandavas* still lived and were now married to Draupadi, he, following the advice of Bhishma and Drona and Vidura, sent Kshatta (Vidura) to bring them with Kunti and Draupadi, to Hastinapura. Vidura, at the command of the king, went to Yajnasena (Drupada) and the *Pandavas*, carrying with him many presents for Draupadi. He was received by Drupada in proper form ; and there he saw the *Pandavas* and Vasudeva (*Krishna*), and embraced them with affection. Then, at the request of Vidura, the Panchala king allowed the princes to depart ; and, accompanied by Draupadi, Kunti, and *Krishna*, they came to the city of Hastinapura (I, ccii-ccix).

#### 59. DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.

They were given on arrival a hearty welcome by all ; and Dhritarashtra, anxious that no difference might arise again between them and his sons, gave them half of his kingdom, and asked them to go and live in happiness and peace at *Khandava*-

## 30 THE MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA

prastha, also called Indra-prastha. And so, receiving half of the kingdom, the *Pandavas* entered *Khandava*-prastha, with *Krishna* at their head. It was a delightful place; and after settling them there, the heroic *Krishna* and his brother *Rama* returned to *Dvaravati* [*Dvaraka*] (I, ccix).

## CHAPTER IV

### THREE NEW BRIDES OF ARJUNA

#### 60. LIFE AT INDRAPRASTHA.

HAVING obtained their kingdom, the *Pandavas* lived with *Draupadi* at *Indraprastha*, with *Yudhishthira* as their king. In order that they should live happily together, they, by the advice of *Nārada*, established a rule that if any of them was in the company of *Draupadi* and he was seen by some one else, the latter must go into a forest for twelve years and lead the life of a *Brahmachari* (I, ccx-ccxiv).

#### 61. ARJUNA'S EXILE.

One day it chanced that a *Brahmana* came weeping to *Arjuna*, complaining that his wealth was being carried away by thieves; and, as that hero went to arm himself, he saw *Yudhishthira* with *Draupadi*. He drove away the thieves and restored his wealth to the *Brahmana*; but, as he had violated the rule between the brothers, he requested permission to go into exile as agreed; and, having obtained the king's permission, *Arjuna* went away to live in the forest for twelve years (I, ccxv).

#### 62. THE WIVES OF ARJUNA: ARJUNA AND ULUPI.

*Arjuna*, after seeing many picturesque countries, forests and lakes, rivers and seas, and making

many sacred pilgrimages, came to the source of the *Ganga*, and thought of dwelling there, performing many sacrifices. One day, as he was performing his sacrifice, *Ulupi*, the daughter of a *Naga* king, beheld him and desired him for her husband. Though Arjuna was under the vow of *Brahmacharya*, he did not think it contrary to its behests to marry her; and she gave him a boon, making him invincible in water (I, ccxvi).

### 63. ARJUNA AND CHITRANGADA.

Soon after Arjuna started for the side of the *Himalayas*; and, travelling eastward, saw the countries lying there, and came where the sea was. Moving slowly along the shore, he came to *Manipura*, where dwelt king *Chitra-vahana* with his beautiful daughter *Chitrangada*. Arjuna saw her and was filled with love, and going up to the king told him what he desired. When the king knew who he was, he informed him that she was his heiress to the kingdom. He agreed, however, to his marrying her on condition that the son born to her would remain with the king and be the perpetuator of his race. Arjuna consented and was married to her, and lived in that city for three years; and when she gave birth to a son, named *Babhruvahana*, he took leave and set out on his travels again (I, ccxvii).

### 64. ARJUNA AND SUBHADRA.

Thereafter Arjuna went to the sacred places situated on the shore of the south seas; and then turned westward along the shores of the

western ocean. *Krishna*, hearing of his arrival, came to meet him, and they set out together for *Dvaraka* (I, ccxviii-ccxx).

One day a great festival was held on the *Raivataka* hill, and all the *Bhojas*, *Andhakas* and *Vrishnis* (of the race of *Krishna*) were gathered there. There *Arjuna* saw *Subhadra*, the sister of *Krishna*, and his heart was filled with love; and, following the advice of *Krishna*, he carried her away by force. When her people came to know what had happened, they were filled with rage; but *Krishna* assured them that the alliance was a proper one, and advised them to go cheerfully to *Arjuna* and welcome him back. They did as he desired, and *Arjuna* returned to *Dvaraka* at their request, and was married to *Subadhra* in due form. He lived at *Dvaraka* for a year; and when the twelve years of his vow were over, returned with *Subhadra* to *Indraprastha*. He was welcomed by all; and to pacify *Draupadi*, *Subhadra* came to meet her in the garb of a cowherd maiden. *Draupadi* was pleased at this, and they all lived happily together (I, ccxxi-ccxxiii).

Then *Krishna* and his brother *Rama*, and many others of their race came to *Indraprastha*, and were given a most rousing welcome; and *Krishna* gave much wealth to the bridegroom's party. After living many days in pleasure, the *Vrishni* heroes returned to *Dvaraka*. *Krishna*, however, remained behind, and spent his time with *Arjuna*, roaming along the banks of the *Yamuna* in search of the deer (I, ccxxiii).

## 65. THE BIRTH OF ABHIMANYU.

Then Subhadra gave birth to a son, and he was named Abhimanyu. The child became a favourite of Krishna, his father, uncles, and all (I, ccxxiii).

## 66. THE SONS OF DRAUPADI.

The Panchala princess also had five heroic sons by the five Pandava brothers:—Prativindhya, begotten by Yudhishthira; Sutasoma by Bhima; Satakarma by Arjuna; Satanika by Nakula; and Srutasena by Sahadeva (I, ccxxiii).

## CHAPTER V

### THE BURNING OF KHANDAVA FOREST

#### 67. THE BURNING OF KHANDAVA FOREST.

ONE day, when Arjuna and Krishna were sporting on the banks of the Yamuna, the god Agni, in the guise of a Brahmana, appeared before them, and requested them to burn the Khandava forest for his sake. Arjuna agreed on condition that Agni would supply him with a suitable bow, an inexhaustible quiver of arrows, horses of pure white, and a car possessing the splendour of the Sun. Agni then called upon Varuna, who gave Gandiva, the bow created by Brahma, and two inexhaustible quivers; and also the monkey-bannered chariot obtained from king Soma, to which were yoked steeds white as silver or the fleecy clouds, and they had the speed of the wind or the mind. Then Agni gave Krishna a discus, and Varuna gave him a club, Kaumodaki; and while Agni blazed and burnt up the forest, Arjuna and Krishna fought with Indra who poured down his showers to quench the fire. But Indra was no match for the heroes, and retired; and Agni was filled with joy at the burning of the forest. Then the Asura Maya, with Asvasena and four Sarngakas, issued from the forest; and, finding no means of escape, they sought the protection of Arjuna, who spared their life (I, ccxiv-ccxxx).

## II. SABHA PARVA

### CHAPTER VI

#### THE ASSEMBLY HALL OF YUDHISHTHIRA

##### 68. MAYA AND THE ASSEMBLY HALL.

MAYA, who had been saved by Arjuna, was a great architect, and offered his services to that hero. At the bidding of Krishna, he promised to build a large Assembly Hall for Yudhishthira. Then Krishna, having lived there for some time, departed for Dvaraka followed by the hero Satyaki (II,i-ii).

With the permission of Arjuna, Maya went away to the north of Kailasa, near the Mainaka mountain, and brought from there a club for Bhīma, a conch shell, named Devadatta, made by Varuna, for Arjuna, and untold wealth for building his Assembly Hall. With these materials he built his wonderful Hall for Yudhishthira; and, when it was completed, the king, after worshipping the gods, entered it with his brothers; and many Rishis and princes came from various countries to see it and were welcomed by him.

##### 69. THE VISIT OF NARADA.

There also came the great Rishi Narada, who possessed the speed of the mind; and, at the request of Yudhishthira, described to him the Assembly



Hall of Indra, as well as of *Brahma*, *Yama*, *Varuna* and *Kuvera*. He then advised the king to perform the great *Rajasuya* sacrifice (II, iii-xii).

#### 70. THE ARRIVAL OF KRISHNA.

Following the advice of *Narada*, *Yudhishthira* became anxious to perform the *Rajasuya* sacrifice. But, not knowing whether he would be equal to the task, he sought the advice of *Krishna*, and sent a messenger to *Dvaraka*; and *Krishna* came quickly to the king. He assured him that he was worthy of performing the sacrifice; but he asked him first to defeat *Jarasandha*, the father-in-law of *Kansa*, who had *Sisupala* for his commander-in-chief; and who, by worshipping *Siva*, had acquired power on earth and subjugated all the kings (II, xiii-xiv).

#### 71. THE DEATH OF JARASANDHA.

As there was no one else to fight with *Jarasandha*, *Krishna*, accompanied by *Bhima* and *Arjuna*, proceeded to his kingdom. They came to the city of *Magadha*, and were welcomed by the king; and before long they challenged him to a single combat. *Jarasandha* agreed, and having placed his son *Sahadeva* on the throne, chose *Bhima* for the combat. The fight was long and fierce, at the end of which *Bhima* whirled him into the air and broke his body into two; and then *Krishna* liberated all the captive kings. He installed *Sahadeva* on his father's throne, and returned with the *Pandavas* to *Indraprastha*. After staying there for some time, he started for his city *Dvaraka* (II, xx-xxiv).

## 72. THE RAJASUYA SACRIFICE.

Thereafter Arjuna and his brothers conquered the whole earth, and laid all its treasures before Yudhishthira. The king then set his heart upon performing the *Rajasuya* sacrifice. While necessary preparations were being made, *Krishna* arrived with a powerful army and a large amount of wealth, and offered them to the king. Yudhishthira asked his permission to be installed in the sacrifice, and *Krishna* bade him perform it as he desired. Then Sahadeva was appointed to make all arrangements and despatch messengers to invite all; and Nakula was sent to Hastinapura to bring Bhishma, Drona, Dhritarashtra, Vidura, Kripa, and the cousins of the *Pandavas*. And they all came to the sacrifice of Yudhishthira. They were worshipped and welcomed as befitted the occasion and their rank, and took an active part in the arrangements of the sacrifice. Each had his own appointed task, and *Krishna* willingly undertook to wash the feet of the *Brahmanas* who came (II, xxv-xxxv).

## 73. THE ARGHYA.

The sacrifice commenced, and Yudhishthira satisfied the *Brahmanas* to their hearts' content. On the last day of the sacrifice Narada asked Yudhishthira to offer *Arghya* (respect) to the kings as each deserved, bidding him commence with the foremost of all. Then Yudhishthira inquired from Bhishma as to whom should the *Arghya* be presented first, and Bhishma decided that *Krishna* was the foremost of all (II, xxxvi).

## 74. SISUPALA.

Commanded by him, Sahadeva proceeded to offer *Arghya* to Krishna ; but Sisupala, the king of Chedi, could not bear this ; and in the presence of all began to speak ill of Krishna, and railed at Bhishma for having transgressed the Smritis in ignoring the other elders and preceptors and kings. Yudhishthira spoke softly to Sisupala, but in vain. Then Bhishma rebuked the king of Chedi, saying, " This Krishna is chief among Kshatriyas and preceptors. He is the origin of the universe, and in him will the universe dissolve. He is the unmanifest primeval Nature (Prakriti). He is the creator of Buddhi, Mind, the five elements, and the four kinds of life are all established in him. He is the foremost of all in the world, and will be so long as the upward, downward, and side-way course of the universe lasts. He is the worthiest to be offered *Arghya* first." (II, xxxvi-xxxviii.)

## 75. THE THREAT OF SAHADEVA.

Then Sahadeva spoke, saying, " If there be any who cannot bear the worship offered by me to Kesava, on his head will I place my foot." And when Sahadeva showed his foot, no one among those wise, intelligent, and proud and powerful kings uttered a word (II, xxxix).

## 76. THE DEATH OF SISUPALA.

But Sisupala continued to revile Krishna and challenged him to a fight. Then Krishna, who had pardoned him a hundred times for the sake of his mother who was his (Krishna's) aunt (father's

sister), was roused to anger, and, throwing his discus, severed the head of the king. The mighty hero fell like a cliff struck by thunder, and a great effulgence rose from his body; and, after adoring *Krishna*, entered the body of the lord of the three worlds. *Yudhishthira* then commanded his brothers to perform the funeral rites of *Sisupala*, and his son was installed as the chief of *Chedi* in his place (II, xlv).

#### 77. THE END OF THE SACRIFICE.

The remaining ceremonies of the sacrifice were soon over, and all the princes and kings departed to their homes. And *Krishna*, with *Yudhishthira*'s permission, retired to *Dvaraka* (II, xlv).

#### 78. THE CHAGRIN OF DURYODHANA.

After the kings and *Rishis* had taken their departure, *Duryodhana* and *Sakuni* stayed on for some time, and *Duryodhana* was filled with surprise at the wonders of the Assembly Hall. He often mistook crystal for water, water for land, and land for water; an open door for a closed one, and a closed one for an open door. He was laughed at by *Bhima*, *Arjuna*, and the twins; and filled with jealousy, anger and shame, returned to *Hastinapura* (II, xlvii).

#### 79. THE PROPOSAL OF SAKUNI.

*Sakuni* tried to comfort him, saying that of all the *Pandavas*, *Yudhishthira* alone could be tempted to defeat. He said that the son of *Kunti* (*Yudhishthira*) was fond of gambling, but he knew

CHAP. VI. THE ASSEMBLY HALL OF YUDHISHTHIRA 41

not how to play ; and if challenged, would not be able to refuse. He himself was skilful in throwing the dice ; and, if permitted by *Dhritarashtra*, would win everything in possession of *Yudhishthira* without doubt (II, xlvii-xlviii).

## CHAPTER VII

### THE GAME OF DICE

#### 80. THE HALL OF KAURAVAS.

WHEN Duryodhana returned to Hastinapura, he succeeded in obtaining his father's permission even as Sakuni had suggested. Dhritarashtra then commanded that a great Assembly Hall be built ; and when it was completed, ordered Vidura to go to Indraprastha and bring Yudhishthira and his brothers to see it and to play a friendly game of dice (II, xlix-lvi).

#### 81. THE COMMISSION OF VIDURA.

Vidura did not approve of the king's command and, much against his will, started for the city of the Pandavas. Arriving there, he gave the king's message to Yudhishthira, saying, " The king has commanded me to tell you that his Assembly Hall is equal to yours ; and has asked you to come and see it and play a friendly game of dice with your cousins. There will be assembled those gamblers,—the cheats who have been brought there by the illustrious king Dhritarashtra. Come let the king's command be obeyed by you." Yudhishthira then asked the names of the dishonest gamblers with whom he was required to play ; and Vidura told him the names of Sakuni and others. " Then," said Yudhishthira, " it appears that some of the most desperate and terrible gam-

blers, who always depend on deceit, are present there. I do not desire to engage in gambling at the command of king Dhritarashtra, for a father always wishes to benefit his sons. You are our master, O Vidura. Tell me what is proper for us to do. I am unwilling to gamble; but if challenged by Sakuni, I will never refuse. That is my settled vow." (II, lviii.)

### 82. THE PANDAVAS IN HASTINAPURA.

After this preparations for the journey were made; and Yudhishthira, accompanied by his brothers, relations and attendants, and taking Draupadi with himself, went with Vidura, and soon arrived at Hastinapura. They were welcomed by all; and having passed the day in happiness, they entered the Assembly Hall the next morning, and were saluted by the gamblers assembled there. Draupadi alone remained behind with the princesses in her apartments (II, lviii).

### 83. THE RULES OF THE GAME.

Yudhishthira and others then took their seats. Then Sakuni said, "O king, the assembly is full, and we are waiting for you. Let the dice be cast and the rules of the game be fixed." Yudhishthira replied, "O king, deceitful gambling is a sin; there is no morality in it. Do not, like a cruel man, defeat us by deceitful means. O Sakuni, gambling is not a sport. By playing deceitfully and desperately do not seek to win from us our wealth intended to benefit the Brahmanas. Even enemies should not be vanquished by desperate stakes in a deceitful game. But, when challenged,

I do not withdraw. This is my established vow. I know that Fate is all powerful ; we are all in the power of Fate." (II, lix.)

#### 84. SAKUNI AND YUDHISHTHIRA AS PLAYERS.

Then Sakuni, playing on behalf of Duryodhana, and Yudhishthira engaged in the game ; and, Dhritarashtra, Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and the rest took their seats in the Assembly Hall to watch this friendly match (II, lvii-lix).

#### 85. THE GAME OF DICE.

The stakes were high and equal ; and Sakuni, taking up the dice, threw them and said, " Lo, I have won." (II, lx.)

#### 86. THE DECEIT OF SAKUNI.

" O Sakuni, you have won by deceitful means," said Yudhishthira. The king then staked, one after another, many beautiful jars filled with gold, his royal car, a hundred thousand accomplished serving maids, a thousand serving men, a thousand elephants, a thousand cars and steeds, ten thousand waggons, and untold wealth of different kinds. And each time Sakuni, ever ready with the dice, and using unfair means, cried, " Lo, I have won." Then Yudhishthira staked, one after another, his brothers Nakula, Sahadeva, Arjuna and Bhīma ; and each time Sakuni, adopting unfair means, cried, " Lo, I have won." Then he staked himself, the last of the *Pandava* brothers ; and again Sakuni, adopting unfair means, cried, " Lo, I have won." (II, lx-lxv.)

#### 87. THE STAKE OF DRAUPADI.

Then Sakuni, addressing Yudhishthira, cried,



"There is still one stake, dear to you, which is not yet won. Stake Draupadi, the princess of Panchala." Then Yudhishthira staked Draupadi, fair like Sri, and blooming like the lotus; and all who heard were filled with fear and shame, and tears began to trickle down their eyes. Dhritarashtra alone was glad, and could hardly conceal his emotion when Sakuni cried, "Lo, I have won." (II, lxxv.)

### 88. DRAUPADI AND THE ASSEMBLY HALL.

Duryodhana then asked Vidura to bring Draupadi into the Assembly Hall, but the latter indignantly refused. Then turning to Pratikāmin, a man of the Suta caste, he commanded him to do so; and he went to Draupadi as he was bid (II, lxxvi-lxxvii).

### 89. THE QUESTION OF DRAUPADI.

The queen asked him to return to Yudhishthira and inquire whom he had lost first,—himself or her; and when he did so, the king, like one deprived of reason, did not make any reply. Duryodhana interposed, saying that the princess of Panchala should put the question in the open assembly, and let all hear Yudhishthira's reply. Pratikāmin returned to Draupadi, and she sent him back again for a reply to her question (II, lxxvii).

### 90. YUDHISHTHIRA'S MESSAGE TO DRAUPADI.

Then Yudhishthira sent a trusted messenger to her, asking her to come before her father-in-law, though she was weeping and attired in one piece of cloth, with her navel exposed in consequence of her season having come (II, lxxvii).

## 91. THE OUTRAGE OF DUHSASANA.

Then Duryodhana, finding that Pratikamin was reluctant to go again, sent Duhsasana to Draupadi; and he, with blood-red eyes, entered her apartments. She, much distressed, tried to hide herself; but he seized her by her long, blue, and wavy hair; and, dragging her, brought her into the Assembly Hall, trembling like the banian tree in a storm. Draupadi cried that she was not in a fit condition to be taken to the Hall, being in her season and attired only in one piece of cloth; but Duhsasana did not care, and with dishevelled hair and loosened dress, dragged her into the assembly before all those gathered there (II, lxvii).

## 92. THE ANGUISH OF DRAUPADI.

Draupadi was greatly agitated and cried, "O wretched man of cruel deeds, I cannot stand before these persons in this state. Do not uncover me and drag me thus; I am in my season. Fie on all the Kurus in this assembly when they look silently on this act which transgresses all Kuru morality! Why do Bhishma, Drona, Vidura and king Dhritarashtra, the best of Kuru elders, look silently on this great crime? Here, in this assembly, are present Kurus who are lords of sons and daughters-in-law. Let them all, reflecting on my words, answer the question I have asked." (II, lxvii.)

The Pandava brothers looked on, silent and helpless; and seeing this, Duhsasana dragged her all the more forcibly, and repeatedly called her "Slave, slave," and laughed aloud. Karna was

glad and he laughed too ; and so did Sakuni and Duryodhana, and applauded him (II, lxvii).

### 93. BHISHMA'S REPLY.

But Bhishma was sad at heart and said, " O blessed lady, I am unable to decide the point put forward by you, whether Yudhishthira, having lost himself, could stake and lose you thereafter. The ways of morality are subtle, and I am unable to decide the matter." (II, lxvii.)

### 94. THE UNROBING OF PANDAVAS AND DRAUPADI.

Then Vikarna, the son of Dhritarashtra, gave his opinion that, as Yudhishthira, having been excited by deceitful gamblers, staked Draupadi after he had lost himself, he regarded Draupadi as not properly won. At this Karna was filled with rage ; and, after rebuking Vikarna, ordered Duhshasana to take off the robes of the Pandavas as well as of Draupadi. At this the Pandavas took off their upper garments and, throwing them down, sat silent in the Hall. Then Duhshasana, in the presence of all, began to pull the cloth of Draupadi (II, lxviii).

### 95. KRISHNA TO THE RESCUE.

When he did so, she thought of Krishna and prayed, " O Janardana, save me, save me ! " Krishna, hearing her, was deeply moved ; and, unseen by all, came to her protection. And by his will, as the cloth of Draupadi was being removed, more and more of it appeared and covered her. Seeing this extraordinary sight, all those present

there applauded Draupadi and censured the sons of Dhritarashtra (II, lxviii).

#### 96. THE VOW OF BHIMA.

Then Bhima took a terrible vow that for this deed of Duhsasana he would tear open his heart on the field of battle, and drink his blood (II, lxviii).

#### 97. THE QUESTION OF DRAUPADI.

Then Draupadi, sore afflicted at heart, cried out, "Tell me, O kings, whether you consider me won or not. This day I have been allowed to be persecuted by wicked men in the presence of all. I have been brought before this assembly and exposed. Never before was I seen in public except on the occasion of my Svayamvara. I am the daughter and wife of a king, born in the same order to which you belong. Tell me, am I a servant woman or not? I shall abide by what you decide." (II, lxviii-lxix.)

#### 98. THE ANSWER OF BHISHMA.

Then Bhishma answered that, from the importance of the issue involved, from its intricacy and subtlety, he was unable to answer with certainty the question of Draupadi. Thereupon Duryodhana asked her to get an answer from her husbands; but the Pandavas, specially Yudhishthira, spoke not a word (II, lxix).

#### 99. DURYODHANA'S THIGH.

Then Karna called upon her to go into the inner apartments, as a slave, and choose another husband, for the Pandavas were slaves themselves; and Duryodhana, to encourage him, uncovered his right

thigh and showed it to Draupadi. Seeing this, Bhîma was filled with rage, and cried out, "Let me perish if I break not that thigh in a great battle." (II, lxx-lxxi.)

#### 100. DHRITARASHTRA'S INTERVENTION.

Thereafter a jackal cried aloud in the sacrificial chamber of king Dhritarashtra; asses began to bray, and fearful birds to shriek. All knew the import of this, and spoke to the king to intervene. Then the wise old king addressed Draupadi, and said, "O Panchali, ask from me any boon you desire. Chaste and devoted to virtue, you are the foremost of my daughters-in-law." Then Draupadi asked for the freedom of her husbands, and this the king gladly gave. He returned to the Pandavas their kingdom and wealth, and asked them to forget the harshness of Duryodhana, saying, "It was to meet with our friends and to examine the strength and weakness of my sons that I allowed this game of dice to proceed. Return to your kingdom, and let there be brotherly love between you and your cousins." Then Yudhishthira, accompanied by Draupadi and his brothers, took his leave, and they all started for the best of cities, Indraprastha (II, lxxii-lxxiii).

#### 101. THE SECOND GAME.

They had not gone far, however, when Duryodhana again succeeded in persuading his father to call them back; and, much against the wish of his advisers, the old king agreed to their playing again. This time the wager was that he who lost should live in exile in a forest for twelve years

and spend the thirteenth in some inhabited place, unrecognised; and, if recognised, the period of exile was to be renewed again (II, lxxiv).

Pratikamin was sent in haste to recall the princes; and Yudhishthira, when he heard of the king's command, knowing full well the deception practised by Sakuni, came back to sit at the game again. The nature of the new stake was explained to him by Sakuni; and Yudhishthira, knowing the consequence, yet agreed. Sakuni took up the dice, threw them, and cried, "Lo, I have won!" (II, lxxvi.)

#### 102. PREPARATIONS FOR EXILE.

Thereupon the vanquished sons of Pritha attired themselves in deer skins and prepared themselves for exile in the forest. Duhsasana was beside himself with joy and, dancing about in the midst of the Kurus, cried, "O cow, O cow!" Duryodhana was equally transported, and mimicked the lion-like movements of Bhima. But that hero controlled himself, saying, "If ever we engage in battle again, I shall be the slayer of Duryodhana. Dhananjaya (Arjuna) will slay Karna, and Sahadeva the gambler Sakuni. As regards the wicked-minded Duhsasana, I will drink his blood." Then each of the *Pandavas* took a vow: Arjuna that he would slay Karna; Sahadeva that he would slay Sakuni; and Nakula that he would destroy the wicked-minded sons of Dhritarashtra (II, lxxvii).

#### 103. FAREWELL.

Yudhishthira bade farewell to all; and, at the desire of Vidura, left his mother, Kunti, behind to

stay with him (Vidura). Vidura bade them take Narada and their priest Dhaumya for their instructors, and blessed them all. Kunti blessed Draupadi and embraced her sons, and her heart was choked with grief. But she controlled herself, and blessed them. Then Yudhishthira, accompanied by his brothers and Draupadi, departed for the forest (II, lxxvii-lxxx).

### III. VANA PARVA

#### CHAPTER VIII

#### IN THE FOREST

##### 104. THE BANKS OF THE GANGA.

THE *Pandavas* set out from Hastinapura, and proceeded in a northerly direction. The citizens went after them ; but Yudhishthira comforted them, and asked them to go back ; and, ascending their cars, they came to a great banian tree, named *Pramana*, on the banks of the *Ganga* (III, i).

##### 105. THE DISCOURSE OF SAUNAKA.

The next morning the *Brahmanas*, who had supported themselves by alms, came and stood before them ; but Yudhishthira knew not how to feed them. Then a learned *Brahmana*, named *Saunaka*, well versed in the philosophy of the Soul, and in the *Sankhya* and *Yoga* systems, spoke to the *Pandavas*, saying, "O king, the understanding (*Buddhi*) which results from the study of the *Smritis* is in you. Disease may be cured by medicine, but mental ailments are cured by *Yoga* alone. Attachment is the root of all misery and fear, and the man with attachment is tortured by desire that springs up in the heart ; and so is the possession of wealth fraught with misery. Desire is the seed of resolve ; and every creature acts and desires from ignorance, like a wheel that is constantly



whirling. This is the word of the Vedas,—‘Act, but act with renunciation.’ Therefore act, renouncing Abhimāna (egoism), abandoning all motives and subduing the senses.” (III, ii.)

#### 106. WORSHIP OF THE SUN.

But Yudhishthira was still afflicted with grief, because he could not support the Brahmanas. Thereupon Dhaumya, the priest who accompanied him, asked him to worship the Sun, the father of all creatures, in whom is all food that supports life; whose rays are warm and, becoming the clouds, they roar and flash with lightning, and pour down showers in due season. Yudhishthira then worshipped the Sun by his hundred and eight names, and adored him as he was bid; whereupon the Sun was gratified and provided him with food for all the twelve years of his exile (III, iii).

#### 107. DRAUPADI AND THE BOON OF THE SUN.

The Sun gave him a copper vessel, and said, “I present this to you. So long as the Panchala princess (Draupadi) holds this vessel, the food in it will be inexhaustible. You will regain your kingdom in the fourteenth year from this.” Thus, obtaining this boon from the Sun, Yudhishthira entertained the Brahmanas agreeably to his wishes. Thereafter the Pandavas, accompanied by Dhaumya, and surrounded by the Brahmanas, set out for the forest of Kāmyaka (III, iii).

#### 108. THE FOREST OF KAMYAKA.

The sons of Pandu went with their followers

from the banks of the Ganga to Kurukshetra. They travelled in a westerly direction, and at last came to the forest of *Kamyaka* on the banks of the *Sarasvati* (III, v).

#### 109. THE VISIT OF VIDURA AND KRISHNA.

There Vidura went to see them; and, having heard that they had been banished, *Krishna* also went to see them in the forest. He was filled with indignation at their plight, and threatened to destroy *Duryodhana*, *Karna*, *Sakuni* and *Duhsasana* (III, vi-xii).

#### 110. THE WORSHIP OF KRISHNA.

But *Arjuna* pacified him and adored him as the cause of all creation, its course and end; the mover of all minds, who floats on the primeval waters in the beginning of creation, who is the younger brother of *Indra*, the Soul of all beings, dwelling in the body of the Sun and afflicting him with his effulgence; and from whose lotus-like navel *Brahma* himself came forth. *Krishna* was gratified, and said to *Arjuna*, "You are mine, and I am yours. You are *Nara*, and I am *Narayana*. You are from me, and I am from you." (III, xii.)

Then *Draupadi* worshipped *Krishna* as the sole creator of the world; as *Sacrifice* sprung from Truth, the active power pervading all; and related to him her grief. *Krishna* comforted and blessed her, saying that she should be queen once more (III, xii).

#### III. THE CAUSE OF PANDAVAS' MISFORTUNE.

Then turning to *Yudhishthira*, he said, "O king

of earth, had I been present then at *Dvaraka*, this misfortune would not have overtaken you." (III, xii-xiii.)

#### II2. THE DEPARTURE OF KRISHNA, SUBHADRA, AND ABHIMANYU.

After staying with them for some time, *Krishna* took leave of the *Pandavas*; and, taking *Subhadra* and *Abhimanyu* in his car, started for the city of *Dvaraka*. The other princes also, who had come to see them, left for their respective countries; and the *Pandavas*, bidding farewell to the *Brahmanas* and the people who had gathered there, departed for another forest (III, xxii-xxiii).

#### II3. THE FOREST OF DVAITA.

They then repaired to the sacred and celebrated lake of *Dvaitavana*, and lived in the forest of *Sala* trees, washed by the *Sarasvati*, in the company of sages and *Rishis* (III, xxiv).

#### II4. THE DISCOURSE OF DRAUPADI.

But seeing her husbands in the forest, the mind of *Draupadi* knew no peace. She tried to rouse *Yudhishthira* to anger, but in vain. It was in vain that she pointed out that according to *Smritis* there was no *Kshatriya* without anger, and anger was the energy of *Rajas* (*Guna*). She referred to the necessity of Action, observing that it was from ignorance that people desired for liberation from Action; and that it was by his perverse understanding that the king had been defeated in the gambling match. "All creatures," she said, "follow the ordinances of the Creator, for they are identical

with him, and live in him. The Lord pervades the universe, performing all actions himself; and it is He who creates and kills." But Yudhishthira was not convinced. He praised Forgiveness as the highest virtue, and action without desire of fruit as the highest end. Virtue, he said, was the word of the Vedas, described as the foremost duty. Action bore fruit in the world, but Virtue was eternal; and so he followed the path of Virtue and Forgiveness (III, xxx-xxx).

#### 115. THE ADVICE OF VYASA.

Thereafter Bhīma urged the necessity of Action upon the king; but Yudhishthira was afraid of the power of the Kuru heroes and uncertain of the result of an open war. At this Vyasa appeared before him, and, imparting to him the knowledge called *Prati-smṛiti*, bade him send Arjuna to acquire the weapons of Mahendra, Rudra, Varuna, Kuvera, and Yama; and by his advice the king and his brothers returned to the forest of Kamyaka on the banks of the Sarasvati (III, xxxiii-xxxvi).

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MISSION OF ARJUNA

#### II6. THE QUEST.

YUDHISHTHIRA then called Arjuna, and, imparting to him the knowledge he had received from Vyasa, bade him go towards the north and seek the celestial weapons of Indra. Arjuna, bidding farewell to all, and taking up his beautiful bow, started for the Himalayas and reached the sacred mountains in one day. There he saw Indra in the garb of a great ascetic, and begged his weapons of him. But Indra replied that he would bestow his weapons on him only after he had met Siva, the lord of all creatures (III, xxxvii).

#### II7. SIVA AND ARJUNA.

Then Mahadeva, knowing what Arjuna desired, and wishing to help him, assumed the form of a hunter, and came where that hero was. There also came a *Danava*, named *Muka*, who, assuming the form of a boar, intended to kill Arjuna. Then both Mahadeva and Arjuna shot their arrows at the same time, which fell like lightning or thunder on a mountain, and killed the boar; and each claimed the deed as his own. Thereupon both of them became angry and engaged in a fearful fight, and Sankara bore all the arrows of Arjuna with a cheerful heart. When Arjuna had exhausted all his arrows without wounding him, the two engaged in

a hand-to-hand fight, in which the great God deprived Arjuna of his consciousness. When he recovered consciousness, he recognised Mahadeva in the form of a hunter; and Siva, gratified with his deed, and recognising his powers as almost equal to his own, bestowed on him an irresistible weapon. Then Arjuna, bowing low, adored the blue-throated God as the creator of the universe; as Siva in the form of Vishnu, and Vishnu in the form of Siva; as the foremost Purusha and sublimest Hara; and sought his forgiveness for fighting with him. Then Sankara embraced him and blessed him; and Arjuna, for a boon, asked for his Brahmasira weapon, by which he could fight with Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and Karna; and Mahadeva bestowed on him his Pasupata weapon, which no one, man or god, could resist, and taught him the art of hurling and withdrawing it. Then he gave him that great bow, called *Gandiva*, and, commanding him to go to heaven, disappeared (III, xxxviii-xl).

#### II8. THE GIFTS OF THE GODS.

Then there came to see Arjuna Varuna, the lord of waters; Kuvera, the lord of wealth, accompanied by numberless Yakshas; and Yama, the god of justice and destroyer of the worlds; and there also came Indra, with his queen. Then Yama gave him a mace; Varuna his noose; Kuvera his celestial vision and the weapon *Antardhana*; and Indra his celestial weapons. After the lords of the regions had disappeared, Arjuna ascended the car sent by Indra, and came to his city *Amaravati* (III, xli-xlii).

119. IN THE CITY OF INDRA : CHITRASENA  
AND URVASI.

Arjuna lived in the city of Indra for five years, and there learnt from Chitrasena vocal and instrumental music and dancing.

There Urvashi, at the command of Indra, approached him, in order to teach him the art of mixing with women ; but Arjuna worshipped her as the mother of the Puru race, whereupon she cursed him, saying that he should have to live among women, deprived of all manhood (III, xlv-xlvi).

## CHAPTER X

### THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE PANDAVAS

#### 120. FROM KAMYAKA TO GANDHAMADANA.

IN the meanwhile the *Pandava* brothers dwelt in the forest of *Kamyaka*, always thinking of the absent *Arjuna*. During this period they heard the story of *Nala* and *Damayanti*; and then they started on a pilgrimage to holy places in the company of the sage *Lomasa*. After visiting many places they desired to go to *Gandhamadana*; and when *Yudhishtira* became anxious to see his brother once more (III, lxxx-cxli).

#### 121. THE HELP OF GHATOTKACHA.

They proceeded towards the *Gandhamadana* mountain; but the path was rugged and hard, and *Draupadi* fainted on the way. Thereupon *Bhima* remembered the son of *Hidimba*, *Ghatotkacha*; and that powerful *Rakshasa* chief, who was capable of going anywhere at will, carried *Draupadi*, and his attendants carried the four *Pandava* brothers, and brought them to the hermitage of *Nara* and *Narayana*, situated on mount *Kailasa*, beyond the country of north *Kurus* (III, cxliii-cxlv).

#### 122. THE CELESTIAL LOTUS.

They dwelt there for six nights, expecting to see *Arjuna*. One day the breeze blew from the north-east, and the *Panchala* princess saw a pure



and charming lotus of celestial fragrance brought thither by the wind. She gave it to Yudhishthira ; and, desirous of having more, requested Bhīma to procure them for her. Then Bhīma sought for the flower all over the mountains, and at last came to a vast and romantic lake adorned with innumerable lotus flowers (III, cxlvi).

#### 123. BHIMA AND HANUMAN.

There he met Hanuman, the monkey-god, the son of Vayu, and was delighted to see his brother. Hanuman showed him the way to the garden of Kuvera, and advised him not to pluck any flowers by force of might. He then promised to help the Pandavas in time of need. "Remaining on Arjuna's flagstaff," he said, "I shall send forth fearful shouts, and you will be able to destroy your enemies with ease." So saying, he disappeared (III, cxlvi-cl).

#### 124. BHIMA AND THE LOTUS.

As directed by Hanuman, Bhīma went to the place where the lotuses grew ; and at last saw, near the Kailasa peak and the abode of Kuvera, the charming lake adorned with lotus flowers. It was guarded by Rakshasas who, when they saw him, came to inquire who he was and what he wanted. Bhīma told them everything, whereupon they asked him to take permission of their king before drinking of the water of the lake or taking away the lotus flowers. But Bhīma refused to do their bidding, and so a fight ensued in which he defeated the Rakshasas. He then drank of the water of the lake, and plucked and gathered the golden lotus flowers of excellent fragrance (III, clii-cliv).

## 125. ABSORPTION IN YOGA.

In the meanwhile Yudhishthira became anxious about Bhima ; and learning from Draupadi where he had gone, desired to follow him. Then the son of Hidimba carried Draupadi again, and they all came to the forest and the lotus lake. There they saw Bhima, and were happy to meet again. Then with the permission of Kuvera, they lived there for some time. Awaiting the return of Arjuna and thinking of him, they became absorbed in Yoga (III, clv-clxiv).

## 126. THE RETURN OF ARJUNA.

Before long, however, they saw the car of Mahendra driven by Matali, and therein was seated Dhananjaya, the wielder of the thunderbolt. Alighting from the car, he first saluted the feet of Dhaumya, and then stood before his brother Yudhishthira with all humility. Then Arjuna narrated to them all his adventures in heaven (III, clxv-clxvii).

## 127. DVAITAVANA AND KAMYAKA AGAIN.

The Pandavas lived in that delightful abode for some time. Then, leaving that place, they journeyed on, seeing many beautiful and romantic forests, rivers, lakes and caves. They then came to the dwelling place of Narayana ; and, dismissing Ghatotkacha, proceeded to the mountains in the neighbourhood of the Yamuna. And when the twelfth year of their exile had arrived, they came down to the banks of the Sarasvati, and repaired to the lake Dvaitavana. Wandering joyfully by

the *Sarasvati*, they lived happily there; and then came to the forest of *Kamyaka* (III, clxxvii-clxxxiii).

#### 128. THE VISIT OF KRISHNA AND SATYABHAMA.

There *Krishna*, accompanied by *Satyabhama*, came to meet them, and they were all happy to see him once more (I, clxxxiii).

#### 129. NARADA AND MARKANDEYA : THE DISCOURSE OF MARKANDEYA.

There also came *Markandeya*, the great sage, and *Narada* of pure soul. Then the sage *Markandeya* answered the questions of *Yudhishthira*, telling him how man may be the doer of deeds and reap their fruit, but the real actor is God himself. He also told him how he had seen the Supreme Creator, *Vishnu*, with face beautiful as the lotus or the moon, wielding the conch, discus, and the mace, and beheld the whole universe created by his *Maya*. He said that *Krishna*, who had become their relative, was a complete incarnation of the Deity. He told them how the eternal *Vishnu* lay in Yoga sleep on the hood of *Sesha* the Serpent, encircling the world, and from thence arose a lotus, beautiful as the Sun, from which sprang *Brahma*, the Grandsire. He then described to them the origin and character of the five elements, Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether,—together with their properties,—existing in all substances of which the universe is composed; the difference between the manifest (*Vyakta*), perceptible to the senses, and the unmanifest (*Avyakta*), not so perceptible; compared the body to a chariot, the Soul to the charioteer, and the senses

to the horses; pointed out that the subjugation of the senses is the highest means of attaining to spiritual advancement; and observed that the Soul is imperishable and death but a change of abode. He further dwelt on the three Gunas (Qualities), Sattva, Rajas and Tamas; and observed that Tamas is characterized by illusion, Rajas by action and Sattva by splendour. He showed that Consciousness is the mainspring of action; and the past, present and future are inseparably connected with *Prana* or the Soul,—the essence of the Supreme Spirit, the eternal Purusha within. He explained that *Prana* or Breath is transformed into Samana, Apana, Udana and Vyana; that *Prana* and the other vital airs are seated in the navel, below which is the region of the digestive system; that the arteries issuing from the heart run in all directions, carrying the essence of food, and are acted on by *Prana* and other vital airs. He told them that matter, inert and insensible, is the seat of the living principle, which is active in itself and induces activity in others (III, clxxxiii-ccxxxi).

### 130. THE DEPARTURE OF KRISHNA.

After Markandeya had finished his discourse Krishna, accompanied by Satyabhama, his favourite wife, bade farewell to the Pandavas, ascended his chariot, and disappeared (III, ccxxxiv).

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PERIOD OF PROBATION

#### 131. DURYODHANA IN DVAITAVANA.

WHILE the *Pandavas* were thus living in the forest near the lake *Dvaitavana*, *Sakuni*, at the instance of *Karna*, advised *Duryodhana* to go and see them in their lowly state; and on the pretext that they wanted to go out a-hunting and to see their herds of cattle, he persuaded king *Dhritarashtra* to grant them permission, promising that they would not go near the *Pandavas* (III, ccxxxvi-ccxxxviii).

Then *Duryodhana*, accompanied by *Karna*, *Sakuni* and his other brothers and followed by a large army, went to the forest and there saw his cattle, and counted his cows and calves. Drinking milk and enjoying other delicious things, he at last reached the sacred lake of *Dvaitavana*, and came there like the lord of the celestials, *Indra* himself (III, ccxxxix).

As the followers of the prince were entering the forest adjoining the lake, at his command, many *Gandharvas*, who had already arrived there with their king, *Chitravana*, bade them desist. When they complained to *Duryodhana* of the insult they had received, that prince, with *Karna* and his brothers, resolved to fight with the *Gan-*

dharvas. In the battle which ensued Duryodhana and his brothers were taken prisoners, and his counsellors came to Yudhishthira for help; and that exiled monarch commanded Bhima and his other brothers to go to their rescue. The *Pandava* heroes fought with the Gandharva band and routed them. In the end, however, Chitrasena appeared in person before them, and claimed Arjuna for his friend; and, at the latter's desire, set Duryodhana and others free. Then Yudhishthira spoke kindly to Duryodhana, and advised him to go home; and he returned to his capital overwhelmed with shame and his heart rent in twain (III, ccxl-ccxlv).

### 132. KARNA AND THE SACRIFICE OF THE GOLDEN PLOUGH.

Duryodhana was afflicted with sorrow and grief at his disgrace in the forest, and resolved to put an end to his life. He was, however, dissuaded by his brother *Duhsasana*; and *Karna* comforted him, promising that he would kill Arjuna in battle and bring the sons of *Pritha* under subjection. Then *Karna*, at the desire of Duryodhana, and also to prove his power, set out, single-handed, to conquer the earth; and having subjugated all the kings, came back to *Hastinapura*. Duryodhana and his father and brothers honoured and applauded him; and *Karna* bade them rule the earth without a rival. Duryodhana was happy, thinking that the sons of *Pritha* (*Pandavas*) had already been defeated by *Karna*. And so he desired to perform the *Rajasuya* sacrifice. But the *Brahmanas* in-

formed him that that could not be done so long as Yudhishthira was alive; and they advised him to perform instead the Vaishnava Sacrifice with the Golden Plough; and he did so in due form (III, ccxlviii-cclv).

### 133. JAYADRATHA AND DRAUPADI.

The *Pandavas* had now spent eleven years of their exile in the forest, and went from *Dvaitavana* to the forest of *Kamyaka*. It chanced one day that Jayadratha, the king of *Sindhu*, and Sivi, and *Sauvira*, the son of *Vridhakshatra*, halted in the forest of *Kamyaka* while going to the territory of *Salva*; and seeing *Draupadi* standing alone at the threshold of her hermitage, was filled with evil desire. He came to her and bade her follow him; and when she refused, he caught hold of her, and, in spite of *Dhaumya's* remonstrance, dragged her into his car, and drove away (III, cclviii-cclxvii).

### 134. THE DISGRACE OF JAYADRATHA.

When the *Pandava* heroes returned to their hermitage, they were apprised of what had happened; and pursuing Jayadratha, they soon came up to him, and attacked him and his men on all sides. Jayadratha, beholding his warriors slain, became terrified; and, leaving *Krishna* (*Draupadi*) behind, fled away. He was pursued and caught by *Arjuna* and *Bhîma*; but, after chastising him as he deserved, they spared his life and set him free. Then desisting from further slaughter, they returned home with their beloved wife (III, cclxviii-cclxix).

## 135. JAYADRATHA AND MAHADEVA.

Jayadratha, crest-fallen and disgraced, went away; and retiring to the gates of the Ganga, sought shelter of Mahadeva, the lord of Uma. When that deity was gratified, he begged that he might be able to vanquish in battle all the five sons of *Pandu*. But this Mahadeva could not grant, saying that he would only be able to check them in battle. He then informed him that the great God *Vishnu*, the infinite Spirit, unmanifest, *Pradhana* (*Prakriti*), *Purusha*, and the Soul of the universe, had taken his manifest form in the world. At the end of the four thousand *Yugas* (Ages of Time), when the world was all Water, *Vishnu* lay on the bosom of the deep,—the waters which constituted his body, with the Serpent *Sesha* for his couch. Desirous of creating the universe, he engaged in thought; and even with that wish a lotus sprang from his navel; and there rose from that lotus *Brahma*, who created from his Mind the manifest universe. “There are three states of the Supreme Being,” said *Siva*. “In the form of *Brahma* he is the creator; in the form of *Vishnu*, the preserver; and in the form of *Rudra*, the destroyer.” He then described to him the incarnations of *Vishnu*, and told him that *Krishna* was his divine incarnation in that age, and *Arjuna* was protected by *Krishna*, who rode with him in the same chariot. “Except *Arjuna*,” concluded Mahadeva, “you will for one day defeat the army of *Yudhishthira*.” So saying he disappeared, and Jayadratha repaired to his own home (III, cclxxi).



## 136. THE STORIES OF RAMA AND SAVITRI.

Yudhishthira's mind was filled with grief that Jayadratha should have been able to take away by force, even for a moment, the chaste and pious Draupadi, born from the sacrificial altar. To comfort him Markandeya told him of the sorrow of Rama, and how his wife, Janaki, was carried away by force of Maya by Ravana. He also told him how a good and virtuous wife can save her husband; and narrated to him the story of Savitri, who freed her husband Satyavan from the bonds of the god of Death, and restored to her blind, aged and exiled father-in-law his lost kingdom and sight (III, cclxxii-ccxcviii).

## 137. INDRA AND KARNA'S ARMOUR AND EAR-RINGS.

When the Pandavas had spent the twelve years of their exile, and the thirteenth was about to set in, Indra, their well-wisher, knowing that Karna never refused the request of a Brahmana, resolved to disguise himself as one, and to ask Karna for his natural armour and ear-rings. The Sun, however, anxious to benefit his child (Karna), warned him of Indra's intention, and informed him that if he parted with his ear-rings, his life would be shortened, and he would be subject to death. Karna replied that he was under a vow never to refuse the request of a Brahmana; and so he must part with his armour and ear-rings, if asked, even at the risk of his life. Then Surya (Sun) advised him to ask of Indra his indestructible dart in return for his armour and ear-rings; and Karna promised to do so (III, ccxcix-ccci).

Karna always worshipped the Sun, and when at noon he rose from the water and adored the author of Day with joined palms, and the Brahmanas prayed to him for a boon, there was nothing that he would not bestow on them at the time. And so when Indra came to him in the guise of a Brahmana, and begged for his armour and ear-rings, he could not but comply; only he asked for an indestructible weapon from the god of the celestials (Indra) as Surya had advised. Indra agreed to give him any he desired, except Vajra, and promised to give him an indestructible weapon which would destroy one powerful enemy of Karna, and then return to the god (Indra). Then Karna gave him his natural armour and ear-rings, and took instead the weapon of Indra, hoping to kill Arjuna thereby (III, cccviii-cccix).

### 138. THE QUESTIONS OF THE CRANE.

When the twelve years of exile were about to expire, the Pandavas, leaving Kamyaka, returned to the charming and delightful forest of Dvaitavana. One day when they were all fatigued and thirsty, Yudhishthira asked his brother Nakula to look round and see if there was water anywhere, and go and bring it. Nakula went at the command of his brother, and soon came to a transparent sheet of water, surrounded by cranes. As he was about to bend down and drink, an invisible voice bade him desist, crying, "O son of Madri, first answer my questions, then drink and carry water away." But Nakula disregarded the voice and, as he drank, he dropped down dead. Seeing Nakula's delay, Yudhishthira sent his brother Sahadeva; and he too, refusing to listen to

the voice, fell down dead near the water bank. Then Yudhishthira sent Aijuna and Bhima after each other, and both of them fell down dead as Nakula and Sahadeva had done. Then Yudhishthira, finding that his brothers had taken too long, went out himself; and, coming to the spot, found them all lying dead on the ground. As he plunged into water and desired to drink, the voice said to him, "I am a Crane and your brothers have all been slain by me. O child, do not attempt to drink before answering my questions. The water is in my possession. Answer me, and then drink and take water away." Yudhishthira replied that he did not want what was the possession of another, and then answered the questions of the Crane, relating to life, morality and religion. The Bird was greatly pleased, and bade Yudhishthira ask a boon. Yudhishthira desired that his youngest brother Nakula be restored to life. The Crane was still more pleased that he had begged the life not of his real brother but of the son of Madri, and restored all his brothers to life. He then told him that he was his father Dharma, and bade the *Pandavas* go to the city of *Virata* in the thirteenth year of their exile. He blessed them all, and said that by his favour no one would recognise them wherever they should live (III, cccx-cccxiii).

## IV. VIRATA PARVA

### CHAPTER XII

#### IN THE KINGDOM OF VIRATA

##### 139. THE DISGUISE OF THE PANDAVAS.

THE thirteenth year had now commenced ; and when Yudhishthira informed his brothers and Draupadi of the boon he had received from Dharma, they all decided to spend the last days of their exile in the service of Virata, the king of Matsya, and to do his work. Each of them thought of a suitable disguise: Yudhishthira as an expert in dice, and called by the name of Kanka; Bhima as Ballava, the cook ; Arjuna as Vrihannala, of the neuter sex ; Nakula as Granthika, a keeper of horses ; Sahadeva as Tantipala, the counter of cows; while Draupadi was to be Sairandhri, a maid-servant to the queen of Virata, Sudeshna (IV, i).

##### 140. TO VIRATA'S KINGDOM.

They sent back their priest Dhaumya and all those who accompanied them ; and with Draupadi at the head of all, they proceeded in the direction of Matsya's dominion (IV, i).

##### 141. THE DISPOSAL OF WEAPONS.

Arriving there, they deposited their weapons on a great Sami tree, standing in the midst of a forest on a mountain peak, close by a cremation

ground; and having fastened a corpse to scare away people from thence, they gave out that it was their mother. Then they entered the capital in their respective disguises to seek service under the king (IV, v).

#### 142. IN THE KING'S SERVICE.

Yudhishthira appeared as an expert in dice, and Virata, who was a lover of the game, welcomed him as a counsellor and friend. Then Bhima took service under the king as a cook; Draupadi was engaged by the queen as her maid; Sahadeva became the keeper of the king's cows; Arjuna, as Vrihannala of the neuter sex, took employment as a dancing and music master to the king's daughter Uttara; while Nakula was put in charge of the horses of the king (IV, vii-xii).

#### 143. KICHAKA AND DRAUPADI.

In this way the Pandavas lived. One day, when the year was coming to a close, Kichaka of the Suta caste, brother to the queen and commander of the king's forces, happened to see Draupadi and desired to obtain her. He sought the assistance of his sister, the queen; and taking advantage of Draupadi's situation, sought to seize her; and when Draupadi ran away to seek the protection of Virata, kicked her in the very presence of the king (IV, xiv-xvi).

#### 144. BHIMA AND KICHAKA.

Failing to get justice from either the king or the queen, and unable to bear her grief, Draupadi thought of Bhima; and rousing him from his

sleep, described to him the agony of her heart and bade him avenge her insult. Bhīma promised to slay Kichaka and all his friends. At the suggestion of Bhīma, Draupadī beguiled Kichaka to come alone at night to an empty dancing hall, where Bhīma was lying in wait for him ; and the *Pandava* hero seized him by the hair and crushed him to death, reducing him to a ball of flesh, without head or legs or arms. In the morning when the people saw him, they were filled with wonder and fear, and concluded that he had been slain by the Gandharvas. When king Virata came to know of this, he ordered that, inasmuch as Kichaka had come to this end on account of Draupadī, she too should be burnt to death. Then, as she was being taken to the cremation ground, Bhīma, disguising himself, fell upon the people and put them all to death. The king was both angry and afraid when he heard this, and bade his queen send away Sairandhri when she returned. But Draupadī begged Sudeshna to permit her to stay for thirteen days more, and to this the queen agreed (IV, xvii-xxiv).

#### 145. THE CAPTURE OF THE COWS.

In the meanwhile Duryodhana and his allies had sent spies in all directions to discover the *Pandavas*, but in vain ; and now the thirteenth year of their exile was nearly at an end. Then it chanced that Susarman, one of the allies of the Kurus, who had often been defeated by Virata when Kichaka was alive, persuaded Duryodhana to send an expedition against the king of Matsya to carry away his herds of kine ; and,

advised by Karna, Duryodhana readily agreed (IV, xxv-xxx).

#### 146. THE FIGHT.

The thirteenth year had just expired when Susarman seized by force the cows of Virata. The herdsmen hastened to report to the king; and the lord of Matsya, accompanied by the *Pandava* heroes and followed by a large army, issued forth to fight the invaders: Arjuna, as *Vrihannala*, alone remained behind. They came upon Susarman; but in the fight which ensued, Virata was taken prisoner. Bhima rushed out to help him, and scattering the forces of the enemy, set him free (IV, xxxi-xxxiii).

#### 147. UTTARA AND ARJUNA.

While Virata had gone out in pursuit of the enemy, Duryodhana and his friends attacked his kingdom, and seized sixty thousand kine of the king. The cowherds complained to Uttara, the son of the king; and when that prince found himself in a difficulty for a suitable charioteer, Arjuna, representing himself as having done that service under Partha (Arjuna), took charge of Uttara's horses, and drove him to the battlefield. Seeing the Kauravas protected by Karna, Duryodhana, Bhishma, Kripa, Drona and his son (Asvatthaman), the heart of Uttara was filled with fear, and, alighting from his car, he fled from the field. But Arjuna jumped down and caught him, and all the Kauravas saw him with his long braid of flowing hair, as partly man and partly woman; and though he appeared like Arjuna, they wondered if it really was he. Arjuna

brought back the prince, and making him his own charioteer, took the field against the Kaurava hosts. Seeing him in the guise of a person of the neuter sex, the Kauravas thought that he was surely Arjuna, and their hearts were filled with fear. But Duryodhana thought that if that was so his task was done: for, believing that their thirteenth year of exile was not yet ended, he thought that, if Arjuna was thus recognised, the *Pandavas* should have to begin their wanderings once more (IV, xxxv-xxxix).

#### 148. ARJUNA IN ARMS.

Arjuna, with Uttara for his charioteer, went to the Sami tree, where the *Pandavas* had deposited their arms, and asked him to bring down his weapons. Uttara, seeing the arms of the *Pandava* heroes, was filled with amazement, and inquired from Arjuna about them and their owners. Then Arjuna revealed himself, and told him that his brothers were in the service of his father the king, while Draupadi was the maid-servant Sairandhri. Hearing this, Uttara's heart was filled with joy. Then Arjuna put on his arms and stringing his bow, *Gandiva*, and hoisting on his chariot the golden flag bearing the emblem of a Monkey, —a celestial illusion (*Maya*) created by Visvakarman,—blew his conch, making the earth and sky and hills and mountains shake, and the hearts of Kuru heroes to tremble (IV, xl-xlvi).

#### 149. THE END OF EXILE

Then Duryodhana inquired from Bhishma if the thirteenth year of the *Pandavas'* exile was over. The grandsire replied that on account of the excess



of time and the motions of the constellations, there was an increase of two months in every five years, and, calculating in that way, the *Pandavas* had completed their thirteen years and acted up to their promise. Hearing this, the *Kauravas* felt that it was surely *Arjuna* who was coming out to fight with them (IV, xlvii-iii).

#### 150. THE DEFEAT OF KAURAVAS.

And now a great battle ensued in which *Arjuna* struck terror in the hearts of the *Kauravas*. He fought with *Kripa* and *Drona*, *Asvatthaman*, *Karna* and *Bhishma*; and then with all collectively, and made them fly from the field. Then, having defeated the *Kurus*, he brought back the wealth of *Virata* which they had taken away; and they, routed, defeated and with numbers slain, returned to *Hastinapura* in dejected mood (IV, liii-lxvi).

*Arjuna* bade *Uttara* declare, on returning to his father's city, that the *Kurus* had been defeated and the kine rescued by him (*Uttara*); and depositing his arms again on the *Sami* tree, and assuming the guise of *Vrihannala* once more, returned to the capital as *Uttara's* charioteer (IV, lxvi).

*Virata* too, after defeating *Susarman* and rescuing the kine, returned with the four *Pandava* brothers, and all his subjects and soldiers came out to welcome him (IV, lxvii).

#### 151. UTTARA AND ABHIMANYU.

The king of *Matsya* then came to know that his five servants were the great *Pandava* brothers, and *Sairandhri* their queen *Draupadi*; and, anxious

to propitiate them, he offered his kingdom to Yudhishthira, and his daughter Uttara to Arjuna as wife. But Arjuna accepted her as his daughter-in-law, the wife of the mighty-armed Abhimanyu instead; and, with Yudhishthira's assent, the alliance was duly made. Then Krishna and all the friends and relations of the Pandavas were invited to the wedding, and the nuptials of Abhimanyu and Uttara were celebrated in the presence of all (IV, lxxi-lxxii).

#### 152. THE PANDAVAS IN UPAPLAVYA.

The Pandavas then took up their abode in Virata's town called Upaplavya (IV, lxxii).

## V. UDYOGA PARVA

### CHAPTER XIII

#### PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

##### 153. THE ADVICE OF KRISHNA.

ONE day, after the nuptials were duly celebrated, *Krishna* spoke to the heroes and kings assembled at the court of *Virata*, saying how *Yudhishthira* had been defeated by a trick at the game of dice, robbed of his ancestral kingdom, and sent into exile for thirteen years. The *Pandavas* had fulfilled their vow, and were entitled to their kingdom; and he advised that a capable ambassador be sent to persuade the *Kurus* to restore to them their rightful share. He pointed out that their relations were the same with the sons of *Kuru* and *Pandu*; and if the chief among the *Kurus* sought peace on equal terms, no injury should be done. A number of princes thought that the *Kauravas* would listen only if an appeal to justice were supported by a large army; and so they summoned the assistance of their allies in the cause of the *Pandavas*. At the same time *Drupada* sent his own priest, ripe in wisdom and age, to the court of the *Kauravas* (V, i-v).

##### 154. THE ASSISTANCE OF KRISHNA.

Soon after *Krishna* returned to *Dvaraka*, and *Dhananjaya* (*Arjuna*) followed him there to seek his assistance. In the meanwhile *Duryodhana*,

having come to know of the preparations for war, also set out for the city of *Dvaraka*; and both Arjuna and he came to see *Krishna* as he lay asleep. Duryodhana, who entered first, sat down near his head, while Arjuna stood near his feet; and so when *Krishna* awoke, he saw Arjuna standing before him. He welcomed the two princes; and, after due greetings, Duryodhana besought his assistance in the forthcoming war, pointing out that *Krishna's* relations with the two parties were the same, and he (Duryodhana) had approached him first. *Krishna* admitted the truth of what he had said, but pointed out that he had seen Dhananjaya first; who, besides, being the younger of the two, should be assisted first. But he was willing to help both. He had a large army of Gopas, each of whom was capable of slaying him (*Krishna*), while he himself would not fight. Let the princes make a choice. Let the army belong to the one, and he himself, alone, not fighting, to the other; and he asked Dhananjaya to make the selection first. Then the son of Kuntī chose *Krishna*, even though he was not to fight; while Duryodhana gladly chose the army of the Gopas (V, vii).

#### 155. BALARAMA'S NEUTRALITY.

Duryodhana then went to seek the assistance of Balarama who, however, decided to remain neutral in this struggle (V, vii).

#### 156. KRITAVARMAN.

He then went to *Kritavarman*, who gave him an army numbering an *Akshauhini*; and the Kuru

hero returned home with a light heart causing his friends to rejoice (V, vii).

#### 157. KRISHNA AND ARJUNA.

After Duryodhana had taken his departure, Janardana (*Krishna*) said to Arjuna, "Knowing that I shall not take any part in the battle, why have you chosen me?" Arjuna replied, "There is no doubt that you can slay all of them : so also can I. But I am a seeker after fame, and I wish to have you as my charioteer." "It is fitting, O son of *Pritha*," said *Krishna*, "that you should measure yourself with me. I shall act as your charioteer. Let your desire be fulfilled." (V, vii.)

#### 158. THE PART OF SALYA.

*Salya*, the king of *Madra*, and the brother of *Madri*, the lord of an *Akshauhini*, having heard the news of hostility between the two parties, went to help the *Pandavas*. But *Duryodhana* met him on the way and welcomed and honoured him ; and when the king of *Madra* was pleased, begged of him a boon that he should become the leader of his army. *Salya* agreed, but desired to see *Yudhishthira* before accompanying *Duryodhana* to his capital (V, viii).

#### 159. SALYA AND THE PANDAVAS.

*Salya* then proceeded to see the sons of *Kunti* and told them all about his meeting with *Duryodhana* and the promise he had made. *Yudhishthira* accepted the situation with a good grace ; only he asked *Salya* to do one thing for the *Pandavas*.

“When the two heroes, Karna and Arjuna, meet in battle,” he said, “you will, without doubt, be the charioteer of Karna. Protect Arjuna, and do that which will kill the energy of the son of Suta.” Salya readily agreed and, bidding farewell to the sons of Kunti, he went with his army to Duryodhana (V, viii-xviii).

#### 160. THE FORCES OF PANDAVAS AND KAURAVAS.

Thus the two parties mustered their forces; and on the side of the *Pandavas* were assembled seven *Akshauhinis*, brought together by the seven princes:—Yudhishtira; Yuyudhana of the *Satvata* race; Dhrishtaketu, the king of Chedi; Jayatsena, the son of Jarasandha, the prince of Magadha; *Pandya*; Drupada, and Virata; while eleven *Akshauhinis* were assembled on the side of the Kurus, brought together by Bhagadatta; Bhurisravas; Salya; Kritavarman; Jayadratha; Saudakshina; Nila; the two kings of *Avanti*; the Kaikeya princes; and three armies of a miscellaneous sort (V, xix; cf. lvii).

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE MESSENGERS OF PEACE

#### 161. THE EMBASSIES.

WHEN the priest of Drupada arrived at Hastinapura, he was greeted by Dhritarashtra, Bhishma and Vidura ; and he delivered his message, saying that the sons of *Pandu* did not wish to wage war with the sons of *Kuru*. They did not want to get back their own by ruining the world ; but they asked that, as dictated by virtue and agreed to in the stipulation, they should get back what they deserved. Thereupon Dhritarashtra promised to send Sanjaya to the sons of *Pritha*, and sent away the priest of Drupada with all due honours. Then calling Sanjaya, the son of *Gavalgana*, he bade him repair to the *Pandavas*, and charged him to speak to them as he thought fit, and to utter nothing that might give cause for hostility (V,xx-xxii).

#### 162. THE MISSION OF SANJAYA.

Sanjaya went to Upaplavya to see the sons of *Pandu* as he was bid ; and after mutual greetings delivered to them his message of goodwill and peace, pointing out the difficulty of their conquering the *Kurus*, protected as they were by *Drona*, *Bhishma*, *Asvatthaman*, *Salya*, *Kripa*, and *Karna*. *Yudhishthira* expressed himself ready for peace on condition that he was given *Indraprastha* for

his kingdom. But Sanjaya pleaded that he should not make war even if the Kurus did not give him his rightful share (V, xxiii-xxviii).

#### 163. KRISHNA'S INTERVENTION.

At this *Krishna* intervened and observed that he himself desired peace, and understood the point of view of the two schools of thought,—one holding that it is by work that we attain salvation, and the other that salvation is achieved through knowledge alone and by abstaining from work. But in his opinion the view that anything other than work is good, was the utterance of a fool; for the whole universe is held together by work, and it is through work that the gods themselves become resplendent. It was the duty of a *Kshatriya*, he observed, to slay the robber; and the sons of *Dhritarashtra* had robbed the sons of *Pandu* of their just inheritance. Their share had been fixed, and they were entitled to it (V, xxix).

#### 164. THE OFFER OF KRISHNA.

In conclusion *Krishna* offered to go himself to the *Kauravas* to bring about peace, if he could, without injury to the interests of the sons of *Pandu* (V, xxix).

#### 165. THE OFFER OF YUDHISHTHIRA : FIVE VILLAGES.

Then Sanjaya, after due honour and ceremony, took leave and departed, and *Yudhishthira* asked him to assure *Duryodhana* that they intended to do nothing that was not agreeable to him, only he must give them back the city of *Indra*; or, if that was not acceptable to him, let him give to the five



*Pandava* brothers but one province out of his kingdom,—nay, but five villages, *Avisthala*, *Vrikasthala*, *Makandi*, *Varanavata*, with any other for a fifth;—and they would be content to live in peace (V, xxx-xxxix).

#### 166. THE ADVICE OF VIDURA.

On returning to *Hastinapura*, *Sanjaya* sought audience of *Dhritarashtra* and advised him to share his kingdom with the sons of *Pandu*. After he had retired, promising to deliver the message of the *Pandavas* in an open assembly of the elders, the king sent for *Vidura* and sought his advice. “A wise man,” said *Vidura*, “does or abstains from doing an act after reflecting on its reasons, result, and his own ability. In nothing but knowledge and devotion, in nothing but the control of the senses, in nothing but the perfect abandonment of avarice, do I see your good. Let your sons, therefore, make friends with the sons of *Pandu*, and let the sons of *Pandu* make friends with your sons; and let both live happily in prosperity and peace. Give them their due share or at least some villages to live in.” (V, xxxii-xxxix.)

#### 167. THE DISCOURSE OF SANAT-SUJATA.

But as the king, though wishing for peace, was yet uncertain in mind, *Vidura* asked him to seek the advice of the celebrated *Rishi*, *Sanat-Sujata*; and, even as remembered, that sage appeared before the king (V, xl).

*Dhritarashtra* asked the sage whether, in his opinion, death exists. “Ignorance is death,” replied

the sage ; “ the pursuit of Brahman or self-knowledge is immortality. The remembrance of earthly enjoyments is the first cause of death to men ; but he who has succeeded in controlling himself cannot be destroyed. The inner Soul exists in the body, wedded to wrath and desire ; but a person who has knowledge is not afraid of death.”

“ The Vedas,” said Dhṛitarashṭra, “ declare that the blessed regions, attained by the performance of sacrifices, offer emancipation to mortals. Knowing this, should not a learned man engage in action in the world? ”

“ The unlearned,” replied Sanat-Sujāta, “ attain to these regions by action; but he who has renounced all desires gains emancipation at once.”

“ What,” asked the king, “ induces action in the Supreme Being who is without birth? If He pervades everything, what can be his action or happiness? ”

“ It is a great mistake,” replied the sage, “ to identify things that are essentially different. Creatures come into existence by the union of the Supreme Soul with certain conditions of time, place etc. ; but the two are not to be identified. The Supreme Being, by his constant transformation, creates the world : this is the teaching of the Vedas. The universe shines (comes into existence) from the Supreme Soul, but is distinct from him in name, form, etc. Both asceticism and sacrifices are prescribed for attaining to the Supreme Being ; but a learned man succeeds by means of knowledge ; and the unwise man, desirous of fruit, enjoys the other world (after death) for a time, and comes

back again to tread the same path. Let your Soul be attached to Truth. On Truth is founded the universe."

"There are some," said Dhritarashtra, "who practise virtue, and some who do not practise virtue and renounce all action. Who is superior?"

"Both," replied the sage, "are of use in obtaining emancipation. But the wise man attains to salvation by means of knowledge."

"By the fifth Veda, called *Akhyana*," said Dhritarashtra, "it is declared that the Supreme Soul is identified with the universe. But there are some who recognise four Vedas, some three, some two, and some only one; while another class recognise only the Supreme Being. Of these whom am I to regard as really possessing the knowledge of the Supreme?"

"It is from ignorance of the One that ought to be known," replied the sage, "that several Vedas have been conceived. There is but one Truth; but who has attained it? Some perform sacrifices and other acts; but the fruit of knowledge is immediate, and of asceticism remote. He who stands on Truth knows the Supreme Soul; for his true essence and nature neither the Vedas nor any one else can know. No clue can be found of the Soul in the east, west, south or north or in the intermediate directions; and it is in the inner Soul that Brahma resides."

"Of what form," asked Dhritarashtra, "is the Supreme Soul?"

"It cannot," replied the sage, "be compared to anything in the world; nor can it anywhere

be found. But it is the foundation of everything. It is the universe, and all creatures are born from it. Having no duality, it is manifest in the form of the universe; and those who know it become immortal. The seed is *Brahma*; and from him spring the five subtle elements, which again give birth to the five gross elements; and the heart contains both the gods, the individual Soul and the Supreme Soul. The being who is the inner Soul is of the size of the thumb, and by being joined with the human body, ever moves. But fools do not perceive it as manifest within everything. True knowledge is another name for the inner Soul, which those gain who have self-control. His form cannot be seen by the eye; only those who lead pure lives can see it. Though without birth, he moves about in full consciousness day and night; and, according to the *Smritis*, he is mother, father and again he is the son. he is the Soul of everything in the universe." So saying the sage disappeared (V, xlii-xlvi).

#### 168. THE COUNCIL OF PEACE.

The next day a great assembly of princes and elders was held by *Dhritarashtra* in his Council Chamber, and *Sanjaya* delivered to them the message of peace he bore from *Yudhishthira*. At their request he described to them the strength of the *Pandava* forces, with *Dhrishadyumna* as their chief, and told them of their seven *Akshauhinis*, and the assistance and guidance of *Krishna*. He advised them to make peace, or else they would be defeated and slain. He further described *Krishna* as the creator of the universe, and *Arjuna* as equal

to him in every detail of nature, suggesting that Janardana (*Krishna*) was but making the *Pandavas* his instruments for the destruction of the Kurus if they did not make peace (V, xlvii-lxviii).

The blind old king was deeply moved by what Sanjaya said, and asked him how he came to know that Madhava (*Krishna*) was the great lord of the three worlds, when he himself (the king) was ignorant of it. To this Sanjaya replied that it was so because the king had been deprived of true knowledge (V, lxix).

#### 169. DURYODHANA'S DETERMINATION.

The king then advised Duryodhana to desist from war, and so did Bhishma and Vidura ; but the prince, supported and encouraged by Karna, refused to listen. He represented that, while he himself was desirous of peace, the *Pandavas* would have their revenge by destroying them all, if admitted to their share of the kingdom. As Karna encouraged the prince to fight, Bhishma rebuked him (Karna) ; whereupon the son of Radha, feeling hurt, left the court and retired to his own house ; and Duryodhana, to support his friend, declared his intention to fight the *Pandavas* with the assistance of Karna and Duhsasana alone, if forsaken by all the Kurus. Finding how difficult it was to convince his son, Dhritarashtra wished that Krishna himself could come and win him over to peace (V, liv-lxxi).

## CHAPTER XV

### THE MISSION OF KRISHNA

170. KRISHNA AT HASTINAPURA.

ON the return of Sanjaya Yudhishthira informed Krishna of the intentions of Dhritarashtra. "Sanjaya," he said, "knows the heart and is the very soul of Dhritarashtra. I asked but for five villages,—Avisthala, Vrikasthala, Makandi, Varanavata and any other for the last or fifth,—or for five towns, if they preferred; but even these the wicked-souled son of Dhritarashtra does not grant. What is then more regrettable than this?" Krishna comforted him as well as others, saying that for the good of both the parties he would go to the Kuru camp; and, in spite of the vicious nature of Duryodhana, try to bring about peace without sacrificing the interests of the Pandavas.

"The earth," he said, "is moistened and purified by action; but without rain it cannot be made to yield a crop. Human affairs are accomplished both by divine providence and exertion on the part of man. Your kingdom has been wrested from you by deceit, and I too was sought to be withdrawn from your side by that vicious one. But that could not be. I shall go to king Dhritarashtra with the desire of doing what is right, what is for our good, and for the benefit of the Kurus." So saying, Janardana ascended his chariot, and proceeded to the kingdom of the Kurus (V, lxii-lxxxiii).

## 171. KRISHNA'S RECEPTION.

When Dhritarashtra heard that Krishna was coming, he wished that he should receive a most hearty welcome; that all his sons and grandsons, with the exception of Duryodhana, should go to receive him; and that beautiful girls should go out to see him with their veils withdrawn. And so he gave orders that all his subjects,—men, women and children,—should go out to behold Krishna, bright like the rising Sun, and that he should be lodged in the house of Dushasana, well-furnished and cleaned for his reception. (V, lxxxvi).

## 172. THE RESOLVE OF DURYODHANA.

But Duryodhana tried to persuade his father to withhold this welcome from him. "Krishna," he said, "is most worthy of worship in all the three worlds, but circumstances are such that nothing should be given to him. War has been decided on; there cannot be peace." And, to put an end to all difficulties, he resolved to make Krishna, the refuge of the Pandavas, captive while in their midst in the Kuru camp, believing that, with his imprisonment, the whole world would fall under his sway (V, lxxxviii).

## 173. KRISHNA AMONG THE KAURAVAS.

The next morning Krishna arrived, and was duly welcomed and worshipped by Dhritarashtra, Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and others. After greeting them, he went to the house of Vidura to meet him, and there saw Pritha, his father's sister, who inquired from him all about her sons and Draupadi.

Govinda (*Krishna*) told her everything and comforted her. Then bidding adieu, he went to the residence of Duryodhana, and there he saw the prince surrounded by his brothers, *Karna* and *Sakuni*. He was welcomed by them, and they offered him food to eat; but he declined, saying, "One should take food from another when there is love between them, or when one is in distress. O king, neither do you please me, nor am I in distress." Then the mighty one came out of the mansion of Duryodhana, and went to the residence of *Vidura*, and there took the clean and delicious food provided by him (V, lxxxix-xci).

#### 174. KRISHNA IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL.

The next morning *Dhritarashtra* held a great council in his Assembly Hall, and *Krishna* was requested to come. He entered the Hall, which was like the abode of *Indra*, holding by the hand *Vidura* on one side and *Satyaki* on the other; and as he did so, all those gathered there rose to greet him, and he took the seat specially prepared for him (V, xciv).

#### 175. THE ADVICE OF KRISHNA.

When all had taken their seats after him and perfect silence prevailed, *Krishna* began: "I have come," said he, "that there might be peace between the *Kauravas* and *Pandavas*. Peace depends on you, O King, as well as on myself. Control your sons, and I shall set the *Pandavas* right. Let the sons of *Pritha* live to serve you and fight for you, and let there be peace among you all." (V, xciv.)



## 176. THE KING'S HELPLESSNESS.

"O Kesava," said *Dhritarashtra*, "all that you say is virtuous and just, and for the benefit of the world. But I am not my own master. Persuade, O *Krishna*, my wicked son, *Duryodhana*, who disregards the injunctions of the Scriptures, and never listens to what is good. Do you instruct him yourself." (V, cxxiv.)

Then *Krishna* spoke to *Duryodhana*, bade him be wise, and not to let the race of *Kurus* be exterminated. In this he was joined by *Bhishma*, *Vidura*, and *Dhritarashtra* himself (V, cxxv-cxxvi).

## 177. DURYODHANA'S RESOLVE.

"It is proper," said *Duryodhana*, addressing himself to *Krishna*, "that you should speak to me in this way. But why do you find fault with me? I have not committed the slightest fault. The *Pandavas* lost their all in a game of dice in which they engaged of their own free will; and I ordered that their wealth be returned to them at the time. Is it our fault that, defeated again a second time, they were exiled to the forest? Why have they become our enemies? We will not submit out of fear. If, following the duties laid down by my religion, O *Madhava*, I fall down dead in the field, it will lead me to heaven. This kingdom cannot now be regained by the sons of *Pandu*. So long as I hold it, I shall not leave for them even a piece of land which can be pierced by the point of a needle." (V, cxxvii.)

## 178. KRISHNA'S REBUKE.

But *Krishna* rebuked *Duryodhana*, and reminded him that it was he who had arranged the game of dice in consultation with *Sakuni*; and so the responsibility for the result was his. Nor could he forget how *Draupadi* was insulted in the Assembly Hall. At this *Duryodhana* left the Hall in anger, and *Krishna* asked *Dhritarashtra* to control his wicked son, advising that the time had come for him to act (V, cxxviii).

## 179. GANDHARI'S ADVICE.

The King thereupon requested *Gandhari* to expostulate with her son; and, at her bidding, *Duryodhana* came back. *Gandhari* counselled him to control his senses, and act with a view to virtue and profit; and advised him to make over to the sons of *Pandu* one half of the kingdom as their share. But *Duryodhana* treated her words with contempt; and, filled with wrath, went away again to his own place (V, cxxix-cxxx).

## 180. THE CAPTURE OF KRISHNA.

Then *Duryodhana*, *Karna*, *Sakuni* and *Duhsasana* resolved to capture *Krishna*, the deity of quick action, while in their midst. The wise *Satyaki* came to know of their design, and communicated it to *Krishna*,—the performer of action without exertion,—and then to *Dhritarashtra* and *Vidura*. "The fools," said *Satyaki*, "seek to do an act which they cannot perform; and, overpowered by desire and wrath, these men of mean heart, seek to slay one with lotus eyes." *Krishna* smiled and

said, "O King, if in their wrath they can capture me by their might, let them do so, and I shall cure them all of their anger." (V, cxxx.)

#### 181. THE DIVINE FORM OF KRISHNA.

Then Vidura asked Duryodhana to come to the Assembly Hall, and his father and elders reprimanded him for his evil designs. Seeing him, Krishna laughed aloud, and at his laughter the body of the great-souled one became like lightning, and from it issued forth all the gods and creatures of the world. He then blessed Dhritarashtra, and let him see his universal form with eyes divine. Seeing that terrible form of Krishna, the hearts of all, except Dhritarashtra, Drona, Bhishma, Vidura and Sanjaya, were struck with fear. Then Kesava, assuming his human form, took Satyaki and Kritavarman, the son of Hridika, by the hand, and went out. Then said Dhritarashtra to him, "You have seen the influence I wield over my sons. Do not suspect me. I have no evil intentions against the sons of Pandu, O Kesava; and I have tried to bring about peace to the best of my power." (V, cxxxi.)

#### 182. KRISHNA'S RETURN: THE MESSAGE OF KUNTI.

Having failed in his attempt to bring about peace, Krishna took leave of Dhritarashtra and others, and went to bid farewell to Kunti, the sister of his father. She gave him a message for her sons and Draupadi, and asked him to remind Yudhishthira that a Kshatriya is created to perform hard deeds and to protect his subjects (V, cxxxi).

## 183. KRISHNA AND KARNA.

Before leaving the city of the Kurus, Krishna met Karna, informed him that he was the son of Kunti, and advised him to desist from making war on the sons of Pandu, his brothers. He offered him precedence over the Pandavas in case he would go over to their side, promising that during the sixth period Draupadi would go to him as to a husband. But Karna, remembering how he had been neglected by his mother in his childhood, and thinking of the promise of assistance he had made to Duryodhana, expressed his inability to change (V, cxi-cxli).

## 184. KUNTI AND KARNA.

Then Kunti, anxious for the fate of her sons, went out to Karna, as he sat in prayer with his face turned to the east, and waited till his back became heated with the rays of the Sun. Then he turned, and saluted her. "I am Karna, the son of Radha. Tell me what should I do for you." "You are the son of Kunti, not Radha," said Pritha; and then she spoke to him of his birth, and begged him to make friends with her five sons, and be as a brother to them. But Karna turned sadly away from her, reproached her for what she had done in his childhood, and said, "On the side of the sons of Dhritarashtra must I fight with your sons with all my power. But your appeal to me shall not be entirely in vain. I shall not kill in battle Yudhishthira, Bhima and the twins who are capable of being killed by me. Arjuna alone is worthy of fighting with me; and with him shall I contend. O lady of renown, you

shall have five sons still. If I am killed, you will have Arjuna instead ; and if Arjuna is killed, Karna will be with you." Then Kuntî blessed her son, and went away (V, cxliv-cxlvî).

#### 185. KRISHNA'S RETURN.

When Krishna returned to Upaplavya, he told the *Pandavas* all that had transpired at Hastinapura, and informed them that eleven *Akshauhînis* had assembled for the Kurus, and among them Bhishma was in the foremost rank (V, cxlviii-cl).

#### 186. DHRIŠHTADYUMNA'S COMMAND.

The *Pandavas* had seven *Akshauhînis*, each under the respective command of Drupada, Virata, Dhrištadyumna, Sikhandin, Satyaki, Chekitana, and Bhîma ; and, at the bidding of Krishna, they appointed Dhrištadyumna as their commander-in-chief (V, cli).

#### 187. THE FIELD OF KURUKSHETRA.

The army was then drawn up in battle array, and they all came out and encamped in the field of Kurukshetra (V, cli).

#### 188. THE KAURAVA FORCES : BHISHMA'S COMMAND.

After Krishna had left, Duryodhana, Karna, Duhsasana and Sakuni mustered their forces, and assembled eleven *Akshauhînis*, each under the respective command of Kripa, Drona, Salya, Jayadratha, Sudakshina, Kritavarman, Asvatthaman, Bhurisravas, Sakuni and Vahlika ; and turning to Bhishma, Duryodhana requested him to become their general (V, cliii-clv).

## 189. BHISHMA AND KARNA.

"Both you and the *Pandavas*," replied Bhishma, "are equal in my eyes. But I shall fight on your side as I have promised. There is no one equal to me in the world save Dhananjaya (*Arjuna*), the son of *Kunti*. But there is one condition on which I shall consent to be the leader of your army. Either let *Karna* fight first, or I." Then *Karna* promised not to fight so long as the son of *Ganga* (*Bhishma*) was alive. Bhishma consented to become the commander-in-chief of the *Kuru* forces; and they all came to the field of *Kurukshetra* (V, clvi).

## 190. THE VOW OF BHISHMA.

Then Bhishma told *Duryodhana* that he had taken a vow never to slay a woman, nor one who had been a woman, nor one whose appearance resembled a woman; and informed him that *Sikhandin*, born of king *Drupada*, was originally a woman, and had afterwards become a man. So he would not fight with *Sikhandin* (V, clxxii).

## 191. THE STORY OF SIKHANDIN.

He then narrated to him how he had taken by force the three daughters of the king of *Kasi*, *Amba*, *Ambika* and *Ambalika*,—for his brother *Vichitravirya*; and one of them, *Amba*, representing that she had already chosen *Salva*, the lord of *Saubha*, as her bridegroom, he permitted her to go to him. But *Amba* was refused by *Salva*, and so she came to him (*Bhishma*), requesting him to accept her as his wife. But that was impossible, as he was under a vow of celibacy. And so, being

weary of a woman's life, she prayed to Mahadeva to be changed into a man, desiring thereby to be avenged on Bhishma. Mahadeva granted her prayer and she was born as a daughter to Drupada, destined to be both male and female. By her austerities she had secured the favour of a Yaksha, and had changed her sex with him, and so become a man. "With Sikhandin" said Bhishma, "I will not fight, even if I see him standing on the battle-field." (V, clxxiv-cxciv).

### 192. THE ORDER OF BATTLE.

The armies were now arranged in order of battle, and Yudhishthira, following the rules of war, bade that Dhrishtadyumna should encounter Drona; Arjuna fight with Karna; Bhima with Duryodhana; Dhrishtaketu with Salva; Uttamaujas with Kripa; Nakula with Asvatthaman; Saibya with Kritavarman; Yuyudhana with Jayadratha; Sahadeva with Sakuni; the five sons of Draupadi with the Trigartas; Abhimanyu with Vrishasena and the rest of the rulers of the earth; while Sikhandin was to be in front for fighting with Bhishma (V, clxiv).

## VI. BHISHMA PARVA

### CHAPTER XVI

#### THE FIELD OF BATTLE

##### 193. THE RULES OF COMBAT.

BEFORE the assembled armies engaged in the fight, they settled their rules regarding different kinds of combat, with a view to fairness. If a combatant, after fighting, withdrew, he was to be allowed to do so. Those who engaged in a battle of words, were to be engaged with words only. A car-warrior was to fight a car-warrior; an elephant rider an elephant rider; a horseman a horseman; and a foot soldier a foot soldier. A warrior was to fight another after consideration of fitness, willingness, bravery and strength, and after having duly challenged him. One seeking refuge, retreating, or whose weapons were broken, or who was not clad in armour, was never to be struck; while charioteers, animals, and men engaged in carrying weapons, or those who played on drums or blew the conch, were never to be attacked (VI,i).

##### 194. SANJAYA AND DHRITARASHTRA.

As Dhritarashtra was unable to witness the combat, and refused the gift of sight offered to him,—for he did not desire to see the slaughter of friends and relations,—Vyasa granted a boon to Sanjaya, enabling him to witness the whole



scene of battle, and to describe it in detail to the blind old king (VI, ii).

### 195. THE BATTLE ARRAYS.

Yudhishthira bade Arjuna to arrange his troops for the day, and that hero made an immovable *Vyūha* (array) called *Vajra* (Lightning), and Bhīma was placed at the head of the fight. The Kuru army appeared like the full, rolling and surging *Gangā*. The armies of *Dhṛitarashtra* stood facing west, while those of the *Pandavas* faced the east ; and Bhīshma, who led the Kurus, arrayed his troops in human, celestial, *Gandharva*, and *Asura Vyūhas*, as occasion required (VI, xix-xx).

Yudhamanyu, a hero great,  
And valiant Uttamaejas too ;  
Subhadra's son, and Draupadi's,—  
Possessed of mighty chariots all. (6)

And know, O best of Brahmins, thou,  
The most distinguished of our hosts,—  
The leaders of my army too :  
Let me describe them unto you. (7)

Thyself, and Bhishma, and Karna too,  
And Kripa, victor in the war ;  
And Asvatthaman, and Vikarna,  
Jayadratha, Somadatta's son ; (8)

And many other heroes great,  
Resolved to give their life for me ;—  
With many kinds of weapons armed,  
And skilful in the art of war. (9)

Unbounded is our vast array,  
Protected by great Bhishma's arm ;  
And bounded are their forces all,  
Protected by the arm of Bhima. (10)

Therefore, from your proper place,  
In your divisions stationed fair,  
Do you from every side support  
The mighty Bhishma, one and all." (11)

The oldest of the Kurus all,  
The grandsire great, the mighty one,  
Then blew his conch, to cheer his heart,  
Loud as a lion's roar on high. (12)

Then all at once their kettledrums,  
Conchs, tabors, trumpets, and cowhorns,  
Were sounded forth, and great indeed  
Was there the tumult of it all. (13)

Then seated in their mighty car,  
 Drawn by steeds of purest white,  
*Krishna*, the Lord, and *Arjuna* too,  
 Did blow their heavenly conchs aloud. (14)

And *Panchajanya Krishna* blew,  
 And *Arjuna* blew his *Devadatta* ;  
 And *Bhima*, the doer of fearful deeds,  
 That mighty conch, his *Paundra*, blew. (15)

And *Kunti's* son, king *Yudhishthira*,  
 His conch, *Anantavijaya*, blew ;  
 And *Nakula* also and *Sahadeva*  
 Then blew *Sughosha* and *Manipushpaka*. (16)

Then *Kasi's* lord, a bowman great,  
*Sikhandin* of the mighty car,  
 And *Dhrishtadyumna* and *Virata*,  
 And e'er victorious *Satyaki* ; (17)

*Drupada*, and sons of *Draupadi*,  
 On every side, O lord of earth,—  
*Subhadra's* son, of mighty arms,  
 Then blew their conchs each after each, (18)

That tumult rent the hearts of those  
 Who stood by *Dhritarashtra's* sons ;  
 Its fearful roar resounded through  
 The heaven above and earth below. (19)

Beholding *Dhritarashtra's* sons  
 When missiles were about to fall,—  
*Arjuna*, whose ensign is the Ape,—  
 The son of *Pandu*, raised his bow. (20)

And unto *Krishna* he addressed  
 The following words, O lord of earth :—

## ARJUNA SAID

Between the armies place my car,  
O thou imperishable one, (21)  
So that I might behold them all  
Who stand assembled for the fight,—  
With whom upon this field of war  
I have in battle to engage. (22)  
For I desire to see who are  
Assembled, eager for the fight,—  
Wishing, in making war, to please  
The evil-minded Duryodhana. (23)

## SANJAYA SAID

Krishna by Arjuna thus addressed,  
O mighty lord of Bharata race,—  
Stationed between the warrior hosts  
The best of all the cars on earth. (24)  
In front of Bhishma and of Drona,  
And all the rulers of the earth,—  
Said he, "Behold, O Pritha's son,  
The Kurus all assembled here." (25)  
Then Pritha's son saw standing there  
Fathers and grandfathers too;  
Maternal uncles, brothers, sons,  
Companions, grandsons, teachers,—all; (26)  
And fathers-in-law too, and friends,  
Between the two great warrior hosts.  
Then Kunti's son, beholding all  
The kinsmen gathered on the field, (27)  
Was overcome with pity deep,  
And full of sorrow, thus he spake:—

## ARJUNA SAID

Seeing these kinsmen here, O *Krishna*,  
Assembled, eager for the fight, (28)

My limbs grow weary, faint, and sink ;  
My mouth is burning hot and dry ;  
A tremor passes through my frame,  
And makes my hair to stand on end. (29)

And *Gandiva* slippeth from my hand,  
And burns my skin at every pore ;  
I am unable even to stand ;  
My mind is whirling round and round. (30)

And adverse omens I behold,  
Around me, Kesava, everywhere.  
No good whatever I perceive  
In slaying kinsmen in this war. (31)

I seek not victory, O *Krishna*,  
Nor pleasure, nay, nor sovereignty.  
Of what avail is joy to us,  
O Govinda, sovereignty, or life ? (32)

They, for whose sake do we desire  
Kingdom and joy and pleasures all,—  
Are standing here in war arrayed,  
Renouncing all their wealth and life. (33)

Preceptors, fathers, and their sons,  
Grandfathers and their grandsons too ;  
Maternal uncles, kinsmen all,—  
Fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law. (34)

These I do not wish to slay,  
Though, *Krishna*, slain by them I be,—  
E'en for the kingdom of three worlds;—  
Then how much less for earth alone ! (35)

And slaying Dhritarashtra's sons,  
What joy, O Krishna, ours can be?  
Sin alone will be our meed  
By slaying all these evil ones. (36)

Therefore ought we not to slay  
Our kinsmen, Dhritarashtra's sons;  
For who can happiness attain  
By slaying them, O Madhava? (37)

With mind corrupted through their greed,  
Although they fail to see the harm  
Done when the family decays,  
Or sin in treachery to friends; (38)

Yet wherefore we, who know it all,  
Should not desist from all this sin?—  
Knowing, when family decays,  
What evil comes Janardana! (39)

For when the family decays,  
The eternal family-Dharma dies;  
Unrighteousness overcometh all  
The family, when Dharma dies. (40)

And when unrighteousness prevails,  
The women of the family  
Become corrupt, and rises then  
The inter-mingling of the castes. (41)

This caste-confusion leads to hell  
The family, its slayers all;  
And fall their ancestors, deprived  
Of water, offerings of rice. (42)

And by the sin of those who slay  
The family, and castes confuse,  
The eternal Dharma of the caste  
And family doth perish all. (43)

And we have, O Janārdana,  
 Heard that the dwelling-place of those,  
 The Dharma of whose family  
 Is lost, is evermore in hell. (44)

Alas, alas, we are engaged  
 In doing a deed of mighty sin,—  
 Ready our kinsmen to destroy  
 For joy of kingdom in our greed! (45)

Indeed, if Dhritarāshtra's sons,  
 Weapon in hand, should slay me here,—  
 All unresisting and unarmed,—  
 That would be better far for me. (46)

SANJAYA SAID

Saying this, Arjuna cast aside  
 His bow and arrow on the ground,  
 And sat down on his chariot seat,—  
 His mind all overcome with grief. (47)

197. CHAPTER II.

YOGA IN RELATION TO SANKHYA.

SANJAYA SAID

THEN Madhusūdana unto him,  
 Whose eyes were dim with flowing tears,  
 And overwhelmed with pity all,—  
 And full of sorrow,—thus did say:—(1)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID

O Arjuna, whence has come to thee  
 This great dejection at this time?—  
 Excluding thee from heaven, and all  
 Un-Aryan, full of deep disgrace. (2)

Yield not to unmanliness,

Unworthy of thee, Pritha's son :

Cast off this mean faint-heartedness !

Arise, O scorcher of thy foes ! (3)

#### ARJUNA SAID

How can I, O Madhusudana

Oppose in battle with my darts

Bhishma and Drona in battle-field,—

So worthy of my reverence ? (4)

'Tis better on this earth to live on alms,

Than slay preceptors of such great renown ;

And slaying them,—though worldly goods they seek,

I should enjoy but pleasure stained with blood. (5)

What's good for us, indeed, we do not know,—

That they should win, or we should vanquish them,

When slaying those who stand before us there,—

Dhritarashtra's sons,—no wish to live have we. (6)

My heart's o'ercome by taint of helplessness ;

My mind's confused,—not knowing what is right.

I ask thee, tell me, what is best for me :

Teach me, thy pupil,—O my refuge thou ! (7)

I see not anything that can remove

This grief that overbears my senses all,—

Though I should gain unrivalled power on earth,

Or else the sovereignty of gods above. (8)

#### SANJAYA SAID

Thus spake he unto Hrishikesa,

Arjuna, the scorcher of his foes,—

And said, "I cannot fight at all,

O Govinda,"—sinking silently. (9)



And then, O lord of Bharata race,  
 All smiling, Krishna spake to him,—  
 Even as between the warrior hosts  
 He stood, o'ercome by sorrow deep. (10)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Thou griev'st for those who need no grief,  
 Yet words of wisdom speakest thou:  
 The wise indeed are those who feel  
 No grief for living or the dead. (11)

For ne'er was time when I was not,  
 Or thou, or all these lords of men;  
 And never shall we cease to be  
 Hereafter all of us again. (12)

As follow childhood, youth, and age  
 The embodied one in bodily frame,  
 So doth another body too;  
 The wise one's not perplexed thereby. (13)

The contacts of the senses born  
 Give cold and heat, and joy and pain;  
 They come and go, impermanent.  
 Bear them, O thou of Bharata race. (14)

He who is not disturbed by these,—  
 That person, O thou chief of men,  
 So calm, the same in joy and pain,  
 Deserveth immortality. (15)

The unreal never can exist,  
 The real never cease to be;  
 The truth about this has been seen  
 By those who understand the truth. (16)

Know that is indestructible  
By whom pervaded is this all;  
And none hath power to destroy  
That being indestructible. (17)

The bodies of the embodied one  
Are mortal, though immortal he,—  
Eternal, and the infinite;—  
So fight, O thou of Bhārata race. (18)

Who thinketh him a slayer to be,  
And he who thinks that he is slain,  
Devoid of knowledge are they both:  
He slayeth not, he is not slain. (19)

He is not born, nor ever can he die;  
Nor, having been, may ever cease to be;  
Eternal, changeless, ancient, and unborn,  
He is not slain when is the body slain. (20)

Who knows he's indestructible,  
Eternal, changeless, and unborn,—  
How can he, O Prithā's son,  
Slay him, or cause him to be slain? (21)

Just as a man his worn-out clothes discards,  
And weareth others, new ones, even so,  
The embodied soul, abandoning the old,  
Doth enter other bodies that are new. (22)

Weapons can never cleave the soul;  
Nor ever can the fire consume;  
Nor water yet can moisten him;  
And him no wind can ever dry. (23)

He can never be cleft or burnt,  
Never be moistened or made dry;  
Unchanging, all-pervading he;  
Eternal, firm, immovable. (24)

And he is called unchangeable,  
 Unthinkable, unmanifest;  
 So knowing him as such to be,  
 Thou hast no reason e'er to grieve. (25)

But if thou dost believe that he  
 Is born and dies unendingly,--  
 E'en then, O thou of mighty arms,  
 Thou hast no reason e'er to grieve. (26)

For certain's death for him that's born,  
 And certain's birth for him that's dead;  
 So o'er the unavoidable  
 Thou hast no reason e'er to grieve. (27)

Things are unmanifest at source,  
 And in the middle manifest;  
 At end unmanifest again:  
 And so what cause is there to grieve? (28)

As wonderful doth some one see it all;  
 As wonderful doth some one of it speak;  
 And some one hears of it as wonderful;  
 Yet hearing all doth no one understand. (29)

The dweller in each bodily frame  
 Can ne'er be slain, O Arjuna.  
 Therefore for any creature born  
 Thou hast no reason e'er to grieve. (30)

And looking at thy duty too,  
 Thou oughtest not to tremble so;  
 Nothing is higher than a war  
 Of righteousness for warrior born. (31)

Happy the warrior who obtains,  
 O son of Pritha, such a war,--  
 Unsought by him, like open door  
 That leadeth directly to heaven. (32)

But if thou wilt not undertake  
This righteous war, O Arjuna,  
Then righteousness and honour all  
Forfeiting, wilt thou reap but sin. (33)  
And then will all the people speak  
Of thy ever-lasting shame;  
And unto one who is esteemed,  
Dishonour's blot is worse than death. (34)  
"He's fled from battle out of fear,"—  
So will the great car-warriors deem;  
Thou wilt be held in low esteem  
By those who highly think of thee. (35)  
Many unutterable things  
Thy enemies will say of thee;  
Decry thy power,—and can there be  
A thing more full of shame and pain? (36)  
Slain, wilt thou attain to heaven;  
Victorious, earth wilt thou enjoy.  
Therefore arise, O Kuntî's son,—  
Resolved in battle to engage. (37)  
Looking alike on joy and pain,  
Success, defeat, and gain and loss,—  
Be thou for battle now prepared,  
And so no sin will come to thee. (38)  
This has been taught in Sankhya form;  
Hear in the light of Buddhi-Yoga.  
With Buddhi, O thou Pritha's son,  
Wilt break the bonds of actions all. (39)  
No effort ever comes to naught;  
Nor any obstacles arise;  
Even a little of this truth  
Hath power to save from mighty fear. (40)

Their Buddhi's centred in the soul,  
 Whose Buddhi hath a single aim;  
 But many-branching, endless are  
 Their thoughts who have no fixed resolve. (41)

The foolish ones, O Pritha's son,  
 Who utter only flowery speech,  
 Delighting in the word of Veda,—  
 And saying,—“ Nothing else is there;” (42)

Full of desires, with heaven for goal,  
 Holding that birth from actions' fruit  
 Ariseth, many a sacrifice  
 For power and pleasure they perform. (43)

For those who pleasure seek and power,  
 For those whose mind is drawn away,—  
 Soul-centred Buddhi there is none,  
 In meditation deep engaged. (44)

With Gunas three the Vedas deal;  
 Above them rise, O Arjuna!  
 Balanced, and full of soul, and free  
 From opposites, and wealth and power. (45)

What's in a flood of water large,  
 Is also in a little tank;  
 And even so the Vedas are  
 Unto a Brahmana who doth know. (46)

Thy duty is to act alone,  
 And not to seek its fruit at all.  
 Seek not the fruit of action thou;  
 Nor to inaction be attached. (47)

In Yoga established, do thy deeds,  
 Renouncing all attachment thou;  
 The same in failure and success.  
 This evenness is known as Yoga. (48)

Inferior far is action deemed  
To Buddhi-Yoga, O Arjuna.  
In Buddhi seek thy refuge then ;—  
Wretched are those who long for fruit. (49)

In Buddhi firm, doth one renounce  
Both good and evil actions all.  
Therefore devote thyself to Yoga ;  
For Yoga is skill in actions all. (50)

In Buddhi established, do the wise  
Renounce the fruit that actions bear ;  
And freed from bondage of their birth,  
A state of blessedness attain. (51)

And when thy Buddhi crosses o'er  
Confusion of delusion born,  
Indifferent wilt thou be to all  
That has been heard or may be heard. (52)

Confounded by what thou hast heard,  
Thy Buddhi when it stands at last  
Serene, unmoved, absorbed in self,  
Then wilt thou attain to Yoga. (53)

#### ARJUNA SAID

What is the mark of him who's wise,  
And fixed in meditation deep ?  
How speaketh he in wisdom firm,  
And sits and moves, O Kesava ? (54)

#### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

When he renounces all desires,  
Born of the mind, O Pritha's son,  
Pleased by the soul within the soul,  
Firm is his wisdom said to be. (55)

Whose mind is not disturbed by grief,  
 Who doth not hanker after joy,  
 Who's free from fear and love and wrath,—  
 That Muni is in wisdom firm. (56)

Without attachment anywhere,  
 Who is not pleased, nor yet displeased,  
 Whatever he gets of good or ill,—  
 Firm is his wisdom said to be. (57)

As a tortoise doth withdraw its limbs  
 From every side, when he withdraws  
 His senses from their objects all,—  
 Firm is his wisdom said to be. (58)

The objects of the senses fall  
 Away from him who fasteth, still  
 Their taste remains; and that departs  
 When he has seen the Lord supreme. (59)

The violent senses of a man,  
 Though wise and striving for his goal,  
 O son of Kuntî, drive away  
 His mind by force resistlessly. (60)

Controlling them, the steadfast one  
 Should have me for his goal supreme;  
 Who hath his senses in control,—  
 Firm is his wisdom said to be. (61)

Thinking of objects of the sense,  
 A man for them attachment forms;  
 And from attachment comes desire,  
 And anger from desire is born. (62)

From anger doth delusion rise,  
 And from delusion memory's loss;  
 From memory's loss is Buddhi's death;  
 With Buddhi's death he perishes. (63)

But he who's free from love and hate,  
Whose senses among their objects move,  
Whose soul is by his soul controlled,—  
He doth attain to highest peace. (64)

And in that peace there comes to him  
An end to every grief and pain ;  
For he who hath his mind at peace,  
His Buddhi's fixed in firmness soon. (65)

No Buddhi has the unsteady one,  
Nor any meditation he ;  
Who meditates not hath no peace ;  
The unpeaceful one no happiness. (66)

Because the mind that follows all  
The senses, roving everywhere,  
Doth all his wisdom bear away,—  
As bears a bark on waters, wind. (67)

Therefore, O thou of mighty arms,  
The one whose senses are controlled  
From objects of the senses all,—  
Firm is his wisdom said to be. (68)

When it is night for every one  
The self-controlled one keeps awake ;  
When others wake, the seeing one,  
The sage, doth take it for his night. (69)

As waters all into the ocean flow,—  
Unmoved and still, yet full on every side,—  
So when desires flow unto him, doth he  
Attain to peace,—not he who seeks desires. (70)

He who abandons all desires,  
And liveth from attachment free,  
Without conceit or selfishness,  
He doth attain to highest peace. (71)



This is the state of Brahma,—this  
 Attaining, one is ne'er perplexed;  
 Therein established even at death,  
 Nirvana of Brahma he attains. (72)

## 198. CHAPTER III.

## YOGA IN RELATION TO ACTION.

## ARJUNA SAID

GREATER than action, if thou deem,  
 Is Buddhi, O Janardana  
 Then why dost thou, O Kesava,  
 Urge me unto this fearful deed? (1)

By these ambiguous words of thine  
 Dost thou my Buddhi all confuse;  
 Then say one thing with certainty,  
 That highest good I might attain. (2)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

I've said before that in this world  
 There are two paths, O sinless one;  
 Knowledge for those who follow Sankhya;  
 Action for those who follow Yoga. (3)

By not performing actions, none  
 Freedom from actions can obtain.  
 Nor ever can perfection gain  
 By mere renunciation he. (4)

Without performing actions, none  
 E'en for a moment can remain;  
 For helpless all are made to act  
 By Gunas born of Prakriti. (5)

He's said to be a hypocrite,  
Senses of action who restrains,  
But sits, revolving in his mind  
Sense-objects,—of deluded soul. (6)

But he who with his mind restrains  
His senses all and, unattached,  
Senses of action doth engage  
In Yoga of action, he excels. (7)

Perform all necessary acts ;  
More than inaction Action's great ;  
Nor can thy body's barest needs  
Without some action be supplied. (8)

Fettered by actions is the world,  
Save when performed as sacrifice ;  
Then, unattached, O Kuntî's son,  
Perform thy deeds as sacrifice. (9)

By sacrifice Prajapati  
Created all the worlds, and said,—  
"Go, multiply by sacrifice ;  
Receive from it what ye desire. (10)

Cherish the gods by sacrifice ;  
And may the gods too cherish you ;  
Thus one another cherishing,  
To highest good will ye attain. (11)

Pleased with your sacrifice, the gods  
Will grant your objects of desire."—  
He who enjoys their gifts and gives  
Naught in return, is but a thief. (12)

The remnants of the sacrifice  
Eating, the good are freed from sin ;  
Preparing food but for themselves,  
The sinful but of sin partake. (13)

From food do creatures all arise ;  
 And food is all produced from rain ;  
 And rain is born of sacrifice :  
 And sacrifice of action born. (14)

And action doth from Brahma rise,  
 And Brahma from the deathless one ;  
 Therefore in every sacrifice  
 The all-pervading Brahma dwells. (15)

Who does not follow here below  
 This wheel revolving evermore,  
 Living in sin, and satisfied  
 Within the sense, but lives in vain. (16)

But who's devoted to his soul,  
 And with the soul is satisfied,  
 And e'er content within the soul,  
 No motive hath in action he. (17)

No purpose hath he e'er to gain,  
 By what is done or is not done ;  
 Nor any interest of his own  
 Depends on anything at all. (18)

Therefore, ever unattached,  
 Perform all necessary acts ;  
 Performing actions unattached,  
 A person gains the goal supreme. (19)

Janaka and others gained indeed  
 Perfection through their actions done ;  
 So do thy actions thou perform,  
 Thinking how they preserve the world. (20)

Whatever doth the best of men,  
 The other people also do ;  
 Whatever standard he adopts,  
 The people follow that indeed. (21)

Nothing have I, O Pritha's son,  
In all the three worlds to perform ;—  
Nothing to gain I have not gained ;  
And yet in actions I engage. (22)

If I, indeed, did not engage  
Ever in actions, all untired,  
On every side, O Pritha's son,  
All men would follow in my wake. (23)

These worlds would perish all, if I  
Did not engage in actions too ;  
And I should all this race destroy,  
And cause confusion of the castes. (24)

As all attached, O Bharata,  
Their actions unwise men perform,  
So should the wise one, unattached,—  
Desiring what preserves the world. (25)

A man of wisdom should not shake  
The Buddhi of the unwise ones,  
Attached to actions. Steadily  
Should he engage them in all deeds. (26)

The Gunas born of Prakriti  
Perform all actions everywhere ;  
The soul, perplexed by egoism,  
Believes it doth perform them all. (27)

But he who knows the bond between  
Gunas and Actions, truly knows  
That Gunas but in Gunas move ;  
And knowing this, is not attached. (28)

The men of knowledge should not shake  
The foolish ones, who are perplexed  
By Gunas born of Prakriti,—  
Attached to actions they perform. (29)

Renouncing actions all to me,  
 With mind concentrated in the soul,  
 And free from hope and selfishness,  
 And mental fever, do thou fight. (30)

The men who follow constantly,  
 What I have told thee here to-day,—  
 Uncarping, true, and full of faith,—  
 Engaged in action, yet are free. (31)

But they who at my teaching carp,  
 Nor follow it, O Bharata,  
 Deluded in their knowledge all—  
 Know them to be of ruined minds. (32)

Even a man of knowledge goes  
 The way his nature doth incline ;  
 All creatures follow Nature's path :  
 What ever can restraint avail ? (33)

The senses for their objects hold  
 Attraction and repulsion too ;  
 Let no one come under their sway :  
 They are the foemen of the path. (34)

Better one's own defective Dharma,  
 Than others' Dharma well-performed ;  
 Better is death in one's own Dharma ;  
 Another's Dharma's fraught with fear. (35)

#### ARJUNA SAID

By what is ever man impelled  
 To sin, O chief of Vrishni race ?  
 Though it be all against his will,—  
 Compelled as if by mightier force ? (36)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

It is desire, and it is wrath,—  
Of Rajas Guna that are born,—  
So ravenous and full of sin ;  
Know this to be thy foe on earth. (37)

Enveloped as is fire by smoke,  
As is a mirror by the dust,  
Or as an embryo by the womb,—  
Enveloped so is this by that. (38)

Knowledge enveloped is by this,—  
The constant enemy of the wise,—  
Having the image of desire,—  
And like the fire insatiable. (39)

The senses, Mind, and Buddhi are  
Described to be its dwelling place ;  
Through these the embodied one it lures,  
Enveloping his knowledge all. (40)

Therefore, O best of Bharata race,  
Control thy senses first of all ;  
And cast away this sinful thing,—  
Knowledge, experience ruining all. (41)

Great are the senses said to be ;  
But greater is the Mind than they ;  
And Buddhi is much greater still ;  
But greater than they all is He. (42)

Knowing who's more than Buddhi great,  
Controlling by the soul thy soul,  
Destroy this foe so hard to match,—  
Having the image of desire. (43)

## 199. CHAPTER IV.

## YOGA IN RELATION TO KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION.

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

ALL this imperishable Yoga  
 I told at first to Vivasvan;  
 Vivasvan then to Manu told;  
 And Manu unto Ikshvaku. (1)

Thus in succession handed down,  
 The royal sages knew it all:  
 This Yoga by long decay of time  
 Died in the world, O mighty one. (2)

That very same and ancient Yoga  
 Have I declared to thee today;—  
 Thou art my devotee and friend,—  
 And this the highest mystery. (3)

## ARJUNA SAID

Much later was thy birth, O Lord,  
 And earlier that of Vivasvan.  
 How may I understand that thou  
 Hast told him all this from of old? (4)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

I have passed through many births,  
 And also thou, O Arjuna;  
 I know them one and all, but thou  
 Know'st not, O scorcher of thy foes. (5)

Though of imperishable soul,  
 Unborn, and lord of beings all,  
 Controlling my own Prakriti,  
 By my own *Maya* am I born. (6)

Whenever, O thou of Bharata race,  
There is decay of righteousness,  
And springs unrighteousness around,  
Do I create myself again. (7)

For the deliverance of the good,  
And evil-doers to destroy,  
And establish righteousness again,—  
I am re-born from age to age. (8)

My birth divine and actions he  
Who knoweth in their essence all,—  
Leaving his body, is not born,  
But comes to me, O Arjuna. (9)

From fear, attachment, anger free,  
On me depending, full of me,  
By fire of knowledge purified,  
So many have attained to me. (10)

Howsoever men come to me,  
E'en so I grant them their desires ;  
For 'tis my path, O Pritha's son,  
That all men follow every way. (11)

Those who success in actions seek,  
Here in this world,—they worship gods ;  
For quickly in this world of men  
Success by action is attained. (12)

The fourfold caste was made by me,  
Dividing Gunas and Actions all ;  
Though I their author, know me thou  
As actionless, unchanging still. (13)

Nor me do actions ever taint,  
Nor do I ever seek their fruit ;  
And he who knoweth me as such  
Unfettered is by actions he. (14)



Knowing this, men of old performed,  
 Wishing for freedom,—actions all;  
 Therefore perform all actions thou,  
 As ancients did in olden time. (15)

What action and inaction is,—  
 In this e'en sages are confused;  
 I'll tell thee so what action is,  
 By which wilt thou from ill be free. (16)

One needs to know what action is,  
 Improper action needs to know;  
 And needs to know inaction too;  
 The truth of action's hard to find. (17)

In action who inaction sees,  
 And action in inaction too,—  
 Among the people he is wise,  
 A Yogi,—doer of actions all. (18)

Who hath his undertakings all  
 Free from all purpose and desire,  
 Hath burnt his actions in the fire  
 Of knowledge,—he is called the wise. (19)

Renouncing all desire for fruit,  
 On none depending, e'er content,—  
 Engaged in action though he be,  
 Nothing indeed he doth at all. (20)

Devoid of hope, controlling mind,  
 And soul,—renouncing all desires,  
 Performing actions for the sake  
 Of body only,—hath no sin. (21)

Content with aught that he obtains,  
 From opposites and envy free,  
 The same in failure or success,—  
 Though acting, he is never bound. (22)

Devoid of all attachment, free,  
Whose mind is fixed in knowledge still,  
Who acts but as in sacrifice,—  
His actions all dissolve away. (23)

The oblation's Brahma, offering too,—  
In Brahma's fire by Brahma made ;  
And unto Brahma he attains  
In action who doth Brahma see. (24)

There are some Yogis who perform  
Their sacrifice to many gods ;  
But others pour in Brahma's fire  
Their self but as a sacrifice. (25)

Some cars, and other senses too  
Offer in the fire of their control ;  
Some sound and objects of the sense  
Offer in the fire of senses all. (26)

All actions of the senses, some ;  
And others, functions of their breath  
Offer in the fire of self-control,—  
By knowledge that is kindled all. (27)

And some make sacrifice of wealth,  
Of Yoga and of austerity ;  
Of study and of knowledge some,—  
Of rigid vows and self-restraint. (28)

Some offer their in-coming breath  
To breath that goeth out, and that  
To breathing in, and hold their breath,—  
Ever engaged in breath-control. (29)

Others who regulate their food,  
Offer their breath to vital breath,—  
All these are knowers of sacrifice,—  
By sacrifice their sins consumed. (30)

The leavings of true sacrifice  
Who eat, to deathless Brahma go ;  
This world is not for those who make  
No sacrifice,—nor yet the next. (31)

Thus many a sacrifice is made  
To Brahma, and of many kinds ;  
Know they are born of actions all ;—  
And knowing this, thou shalt be free. (32)

Better than sacrifice of wealth  
Is sacrifice of knowledge true ;  
All action, O thou Pritha's son,  
Is made in knowledge more complete. (33)

Bending before thy master's feet,  
By question and by service know ;  
The wise who have perceived the Truth  
To thee this knowledge will impart. (34)

Knowing this thou, O Pandava,  
Wilt not deluded be again ;  
And in thy soul wilt thou perceive  
These creatures all, and so in me. (35)

And even if thou art the most  
Sinful among the sinners all,  
Yet by the boat of knowledge thou  
Wilt surely cross beyond thy sin. (36)

As doth a blazing fire consume  
To ashes wood, O Arjuna,  
The fire of knowledge doth reduce  
To ashes action even so. (37)

There's nothing in this world indeed,  
Like knowledge which can purify ;  
He who is perfect made in Yoga  
Ere long perceives it in his soul. (38)

This knowledge gains the man of faith ;—  
 Devoted one who hath controlled  
 His senses all,—and with it he  
 At once attains to peace supreme. (39)

The ignorant one, devoid of faith,  
 With doubting soul, doth perish all ;  
 Neither this world, nor next, nor joy,  
 Can there be for the doubting soul (40)

Actions by Yoga who has renounced,  
 And doubts by knowledge rent apart,  
 He's full of soul, O Arjuna,—  
 No actions him can ever bind. (41)

So with the sword of knowledge rend  
 This doubt of soul within thy heart,—  
 Of ignorance born,—and be thou firm  
 In Yoga :—Arise, O Bhārata. (42)

## 200. CHAPTER V.

## YOGA IN RELATION TO RENUNCIATION.

## ARJUNA SAID

RENUNCIATION dost thou praise  
 Of action,—action too commend ;  
 Tell me decisively, O Krishna,  
 Which of the two is better still. (1)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Renunciation, action too,  
 Both lead to freedom in the end ;  
 But action properly performed  
 Renunciation doth excel. (2)

He is a true renouncer called  
 Who neither liketh nor dislikes ;  
 And, free from pairs of opposites,  
 He is released from bondage all. (3)

Children, not men of wisdom, say  
 Sankhya and Yoga are different things ;  
 He who's established in the one,  
 Truly obtains the fruit of both. (4)

The place that is by Sankhyas reached,  
 By Yogis too is that attained ;  
 Sankhya and Yoga who sees are one,—  
 Truly indeed doth he perceive. (5)

Renunciation's hard indeed  
 To gain without the aid of Yoga ;  
 The sage, possessed of Yoga, attains  
 To Brahma soon, O mighty one. (6)

Whose soul is free and self controlled,  
 Senses subdued, possessed of Yoga,—  
 Sees in his soul the soul of all,—  
 Though acting, he receives no taint. (7)

The knower of truth, intent on Yoga,  
 Thinketh no action he performs,—  
 Although he sees, hears, touches, smells,  
 And eats, or moves, or sleeps, or breathes; (8)

And speaks, or holds, or setteth free,  
 Opens or else doth close his eyes,—  
 Believing that the senses move  
 Among the objects of the sense. (9)

Without attachment who performs  
 Actions, resigning them to Brahma,—  
 By evil is not tainted he,—  
 By water as the lotus-leaf. (10)

With body, Buddhi, and the mind,  
And with the senses too, performs,  
The *Yogi*, from attachment free,—  
Actions to purify the soul. (11)

Renouncing fruit of actions all,  
The *Yogi* gains the highest peace ;  
Led by desire, the unbalanced one,  
Attached to fruit, is ever bound. (12)

The self-controlled embodied one  
Renouncing actions by the mind,  
Dwells in the city of nine gates,  
Acting, nor causing aught to act. (13)

The Lord for people doth create  
Nor actions, nor their agency ;  
Nor bond of action with its fruit ;  
'Tis Nature that prevails alone. (14)

The Lord takes note of no one's sins,  
Nor yet of merit takes he note ;  
Knowledge is veiled by ignorance,—  
Hence are deluded creatures all. (15)

Who have destroyed their ignorance  
By knowledge of the soul within,  
That knowledge like the shining sun  
To them revealeth the Supreme. (16)

On That whose Buddhi's fixed, and soul,  
To That devoted, That whose goal,  
To That they go and ne'er return,—  
Their sins by knowledge purified. (17)

The wise behold with equal eye  
A *Brahmana* full of modesty  
And learning,—cow or elephant,  
A dog, or else an unclean one. (18)

Even here they conquer all the world  
 Whose mind in evenness abides ;  
 Sinless is Brahma,—the same to all,—  
 And so in Brahma do they abide. (19)  
 Whose Buddhi's steady and unperplexed,  
 Who knoweth Brahma and rests in him,  
 Rejoiceth not at pleasant things,  
 Nor o'er the unpleasant doth he grieve. (20)  
 To external objects unattached,  
 Who hath his joy within the soul,  
 Whose soul is fixed in Brahma-Yoga,—  
 He gains unending happiness. (21)  
 Pleasures that are of contact born  
 Are verily the womb of pain ;  
 They have their origin and end ;  
 A wise man hath in them no joy. (22)  
 He who can bear within the world,  
 Ere from his body he is freed,  
 The impulse born of lust and wrath,—  
 Happy is he that steadfast one. (23)  
 Whose joy's within, pleasure within,  
 And he who hath his light within,—  
 That Yogi's one with Brahma made,  
 And gains Nirvana of Brahma he. (24)  
 Rishis who have their sins removed,  
 Nirvana of Brahma they attain,—  
 With doubts dispelled, their souls controlled,  
 Intent on doing good to all. (25)  
 Released from anger and desire,  
 Whose mind's subdued, who know the soul,  
 The devotees, both here and there,  
 Nirvana of Brahma do attain. (26)

Excluding touch with outward things,  
 Fixing the eyes between the brows,  
 And making breathing in and out  
 Equal, within the nostrils twain,— (27)

Restraining senses, Buddhi, mind,  
 And seeking freedom for his goal,  
 Devoid of fear, desire, and wrath,  
 The sage indeed is ever free. (28)

He gaineth peace who knows I am  
 The enjoyer of all sacrifice,—  
 The mighty Lord of all the worlds,  
 A friend to all the creatures born. (29)

#### 201. CHAPTER VI.

#### YOGA IN RELATION TO SOUL-KNOWLEDGE.

#### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

ALL needful actions who performs,  
 Regardless of their fruit, is he  
 A *Yogi* and a *Sanyasi*,—  
 Not he who fire and acts discards. (1)

What is renunciation called,  
 Is verily Yoga, O *Pandava*;  
 A *Yogi* none can ever be  
 Without renouncing all desire. (2)

For a sage who seeks to rise to Yoga,—  
 Action is said to be the means;  
 For one who has attained to Yoga,—  
 Calmness is said to be the means. (3)

When he to objects of the sense  
 And actions all is unattached,  
 And hath forsaken all desires,  
 He's said to have attained to Yoga. (4)



He should uplift his self by soul;  
 His self he never should degrade;  
 The soul's indeed a friend to him,  
 And also is the soul a foe. (5)

Who has controlled his self by soul,  
 To him the soul is as a friend;  
 But he whose self is uncontrolled,  
 To him the soul is but a foe. (6)

Who's self-controlled and full of peace,  
 Is centred in the Soul supreme,—  
 In cold and heat, and joy and pain,  
 And honour and dishonour too. (7)

With knowledge and experience pleased,  
 Whose soul is firm, and senses quelled,  
 Alike to him earth, stone, and gold,—  
 That Yogi's skilled in action called. (8)

To all well-wishers and his friends,  
 Neutrals, relations, arbiters,  
 To hateful, evil, and the good,—  
 He who's alike, doth all excel. (9)

A Yogi should devote himself  
 Unto his soul in solitude;  
 Alone, with mind and soul subdued,—  
 From hope and all possessions freed. (10)

Arranging in a cleanly spot,—  
 Neither too high, nor yet too low,—  
 His place, and firmly seated there,  
 On Kosa grass, deer-skin, and cloth; (11)

And fixing in one place his mind,  
 Controlling functions of his thought,  
 And senses, let him practise Yoga  
 To purify his soul within. (12)

And let him hold erect and still,  
 And firm, his body, head, and neck;  
 Gazing but at the point of nose,  
 Not looking anywhere around. (13)

With soul at peace and fearless all,  
 Firm in his *Brahmachari* vow,  
 With mind controlled, intent on me,—  
 Let him sit, making me his goal. (14)

The *Yogi* with his mind subdued,  
 And soul devoted e'er to Yoga,  
 Attains to peace that culminates  
 In pure *Nirvana*, and lives in me. (15)

This Yoga is not for him who eats  
 Too much, or else too little eats;  
 Nor yet for him who sleeps too much,  
 Or wakes too much, O Arjuna. (16)

In eating and amusement who  
 Is temperate, in action too,  
 In sleep as well as wakefulness,  
 For him his pain doth Yoga destroy. (17)

When his mind is well controlled,  
 And resteth in the soul alone,  
 From longing free for all desires,—  
 Then steadfast is he said to be. (18)

As flickers not in windless place  
 A lamp, e'en so is he described,—  
 A *Yogi* with a mind controlled,  
 Whose soul's devoted unto Yoga. (19)

Where the mind doth rest in peace,  
 Controlled within the heart by Yoga,  
 Where he beholds the soul by soul,  
 And by the soul is satisfied; (20)

And where he feels that boundless joy,  
That Buddhi grasps beyond the sense,  
Where knowing That, and fixed therein,  
From truth he cannot ever change; (21)

Which having gained, he thinketh there  
Is nothing higher to be gained;  
Wherein established, he is not  
Shaken by any misery; (22)

That should be known as Yoga indeed,—  
Which severs all the bonds of pain;  
This Yoga to practise doth require  
A fixed resolve, a mind serene. (23)

Abandoning, without reserve,  
Desires of imagination born;  
Restraining by the mind alone  
The senses all on every side; (24)

Slowly let him attain to peace  
By means of Buddhi patiently;—  
With mind centred in the soul,  
Thinking of nothing else besides. (25)

From whate'er cause unsteadily  
Wanders away the restless mind,  
Let him restraining it again,  
Bring it under the soul's control. (26)

The highest joy to a Yogi comes  
Who hath his mind in perfect peace;  
Who's free from taint, with passions calmed,  
And hath become with Brahma one. (27)

The Yogi who is free from taint,  
Whose soul is ever thus engaged,  
Attains with ease that infinite bliss  
Of contact with great Brahma born. (28)

The Yogi centred in the soul,  
Who looks on all with equal eye,  
Beholds his soul in everything,  
And everything within the soul. (29)

Who seeth me in everything,  
And everything within me sees,  
I am never lost to him,  
And he is never lost to me. (30)

Who worships me as one in all,  
Dwelling within the hearts of all,  
Whatever be his mode of life,  
That Yogi doth abide in me. (31)

Referring all things to his soul,  
Who looks alike, O Arjuna,  
On pain and pleasure everywhere,  
That Yogi's deemed to be the best. (32)

#### ARJUNA SAID

This Yoga which has been taught by Thee,  
As characterized by evenness,  
I do not see its stable form  
Because of restlessness of mind. (33)

For truly restless is the mind,  
Unyielding, strong, and turbulent;  
I think, O Krishna, its control  
As hard to gain as of the wind. (34)

#### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Ay, restless is the mind indeed,  
And hard to bring under control;  
But, Arjuna, it may be subdued,  
By practice and detachment still. (35)

Yoga can never be attained  
 By him whose soul is uncontrolled ;  
 But he who hath controlled himself,  
 And strives, by proper means succeeds. (36)

### ARJUNA SAID

What is the end of him, O *Krishna*,  
 Who's full of faith, yet uncontrolled ?  
 Wanders away whose mind from Yoga,  
 Nor e'er perfection can attain. (37)

Does he, O thou of mighty arms,  
 Fallen from both, without support,  
 Perish but as a broken cloud,  
 Deluded all in Brahma's path ? (38)

Be pleased, O *Krishna*, to dispel  
 This doubt of mine completely thou ;  
 For there is none excepting thee  
 Who can dispel this doubt of mine. (39)

### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

For him nor here nor there, indeed,  
 Can ruin be, O *Pritha's* son ;  
 For him, my friend, who doeth good,  
 No evil end can ever be. (40)

Attaining worlds of righteous soul,  
 And dwelling there for endless space,  
 He who has fallen away from Yoga  
 Is born in pure and happy home. (41)

Or else he in a family  
 Of Yogis wise again is born ;  
 But such a birth within this world  
 Is very hard indeed to find. (42)

There of his former life again  
 Doth he acquire that Buddhi-Yoga ;  
 And striveth more than e'er before  
 To gain perfection, Arjuna. (43)

There by his previous practice he  
 Is carried helplessly away ;  
 Even a seeker after Yoga  
 Rises above the name of Brahma. (44)

The *Yogi* striving zealously,  
 And purified of taint, achieves  
 Perfection after many a birth,  
 And reaches then the highest goal. (45)

And greater than the ascetic he ;  
 Greater than men of knowledge too ;  
 Greater than men of action all :  
 Therefore become a *Yogi* thou. (46)

Of all the *Yogis* he indeed  
 Whose inmost soul is merged in me,  
 And full of faith who worships me,—  
 Is by me deemed to be the best. (47)

## 202. CHAPTER VII.

### YOGA IN RELATION TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF KNOWLEDGE.

#### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

How with thy mind intent on me,  
 Sheltered in me, and following Yoga,  
 Without a doubt wilt thou attain  
 To me, now hear, O *Prithā's* son. (1)

And I shall tell thee everything  
 Of knowledge and experience both ;  
 And knowing that, in all the worlds  
 Nothing remaineth to be known. (2)

Perchance in thousands is there one  
 Alone who for perfection strives ;  
 Among the perfect ones who strive  
 In essence knows me one perchance. (3)

Earth, Water, Fire, and Air around,  
 And Ether, Mind, and Buddhi too,  
 And Egoism,—these are the eight  
 Divisions of my Prakriti. (4)

This is the lower,—and know there is  
 Another higher Prakriti,  
 Which is the life of creatures all,  
 And which sustains the universe. (5)

And know that these two are the womb  
 Of all the creatures in the world ;  
 And I am of the world entire  
 Creator and destroyer too. (6)

And nothing, O Dhananjaya,  
 Is there beyond me anywhere ;  
 The universe is woven on me  
 As rows of pearls upon a string. (7)

In waters taste, O Kuntī's son,  
 And light in Sun and Moon am I ;  
 The syllable Om in Vedas all ;  
 Manhood in men, in Ether sound. (8)

The pleasant fragrance in the Earth,  
 And radiance in the Fire am I ;  
 And I am life in beings all ;  
 And penance of the ascetic too. (9)

And know me, O thou Prithā's son,  
 The eternal seed of creatures all ;  
 The Buddhi of the intelligent,  
 And glory of the glorious I. (10)

I am the vigour of the strong,  
Without attachment and desire ;  
In beings all am I desire  
That is to Dharma unopposed. (11)

And those conditions that pertain  
To Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas all,—  
Know that they rise from me alone,—  
Not I in them, but they in me. (12)

And by these states of Gunas three  
Deluded is the world entire,—  
Not knowing me, who am indeed  
Beyond them and immutable. (13)

This *Maya* made of Gunas three  
Is hard to fathom and divine ;  
But those who come to me alone  
Beyond this *Maya* do they pass. (14)

The evil-doers, deluded ones,  
And meanest men come not to me,  
By *Maya* reft of knowledge all,  
And following the demons' ways. (15)

Of doers of good who worship me,  
There are four kinds, O Arjuna ;—  
The knowledge-seekers, the distressed,  
Who seek for wealth, and who are wise. (16)

Of these, the wise one, skilled in Yoga,  
Who worships One alone, is best ;  
Supremely dear am I to him ;  
As dear to me is also he. (17)

Noble indeed are all ; but he  
The wise one's like my very soul ;  
For with his soul intent on Yoga,  
He rests in me, his goal supreme. (18)



After many a birth indeed,

The man of wisdom comes to me,—  
Holding that Vasudeva is all;

Such high-souled one is hard to find. (19)  
Deprived of knowledge by desire,

Do many worship other gods,  
Observing many a sacred vow,  
Guided by their own nature still. (20)

Whatever form a devotee  
Doth seek to worship, full of faith,  
Even unto that form alone

I make his faith unwavering. (21)  
Possessed of faith, doth he engage

In worship of that form indeed;  
And from it his desires he gains,—  
Though granted all by me alone. (22)

But truly limited is the fruit  
Obtained by these, of little thought;  
To Devas go their devotees,—

And mine alone come unto me. (23)  
The foolish ones but think of me,

The unmanifest, made manifest;—  
Unconscious of my state supreme,—  
The immutable, the unsurpassed. (24)

Veiled by my *Maya*, born of Yoga,  
I am not manifest to all;

The world deluded knows not me,—  
The imperishable and unborn. (25)

I know the beings that are past,  
And present those, O Arjuna!

And those in future yet to be;—  
But no one ever knoweth me. (26)

All beings, O thou Bharata,  
 Into delusion fall at birth,—  
 Born of the pairs of opposites,  
 Arising from desire and hate. 27

The men of virtuous deeds, whose sin  
 Hath ended, from delusion free,—  
 Born of the pairs of opposites,—  
 They worship me with firm resolve. (28)

Who, taking refuge in me, strive  
 For freedom all from age and death,—  
 They know of Brahma, and the whole  
 Of Adhyatma, and Action all. (29)

And they who know me with Adhibhuta,  
 And with Adhidaiva, and Adhiyajna,  
 With mind devoted unto Yoga,—  
 They know me e'en at time of death. (30)

## 203. CHAPTER VIII.

### YOGA IN RELATION TO IMPERISHABLE BRAHMA.

#### ARJUNA SAID

WHAT is Brahma, and Adhyatma,  
 And Action, O thou Lord supreme?  
 And tell me what is called Adhibhuta,  
 And also what is called Adhidaiva. (1)

And tell me thou what is Adhiyajna;  
 How dwells it in the bodily frame?  
 How art thou known at time of death  
 By those who have controlled their soul? (2)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Brahma is the unchangeable ;  
 His innate nature's Adhyatma ;  
 The sacrifice creating and  
 Supporting all is Action called. (3)

His perishable form's Adhibhuta ;  
 And Adhidaiva is the Purusha called ;  
 And I am he that is Adhiyajna,  
 Abiding in the bodily frame. (4)

At time of death, remembering me,  
 Who leaves this body and departs,  
 Unto my nature he attains ;  
 There is in that no doubt indeed. (5)

Whatever form remembers he,  
 When from this body he departs,  
 To that he goes, O Kuntî's son,  
 Intent upon it evermore. (6)

Therefore do thou at all times  
 Remember me alone, and fight ;  
 With mind and Buddhi fixed on me,  
 Thou'lt come to me, without a doubt. (7)

By practice perfect made in Yoga,  
 With mind not wandering anywhere,  
 Who thinks of the supreme, divine,  
 Unto Him ever he attains. (8)

Omniscient, ancient ruler of the world,  
 Minuter than an atom, and of form  
 Beyond conception, and supporting all,—  
 Away from darkness, radiant like the sun ; (9)

Who meditates on Him at time of death,  
 With steady mind, devotion, strength of Yoga,  
 Fixing his breath between the eyebrows still,—

To Him, the Lord supreme, divine, he goes. (10)  
 I'll tell thee briefly all about that place,

Which knowers of Veda call imperishable,—  
 The ascetics' goal when freed from all desires,—  
 Desiring which, they practise continence. (11)

Controlling all the senses, who  
 Confines the mind within the soul,  
 His breath unto his head he draws,  
 Engaged in exercise of Yoga ; (12)

Remembering me, and uttering Om,—  
 That Brahma centred in one word,—  
 Leaving his body, who departs,  
 He doth attain the goal supreme. (13)

I'm easily attained by him,—  
 The *Yogi* who remembers me,—  
 To me devoted constantly,  
 With mind not wandering anywhere. (14)

Attaining me, the high-souled ones,  
 Supreme perfection who have gained,  
 Come not again to mortal birth,  
 So transient and the home of pain. (15)

Up to the world of Brahma, all  
 The worlds are subject to return ;  
 But he who doth attain to me,  
 No re-birth knows, O Kuntī's son. (16)

They who know a day of Brahma  
 Doth last a thousand ages long,  
 And thousand ages too his night,—  
 They know what is a night and day. (17)

At day's approach, the manifest  
 Proceedeth from the unmanifest;  
 When night approaches, it dissolves  
 Into that called the unmanifest. (18)

This multitude of beings all,  
 That is re-born again, again,  
 Dissolveth at the approach of night,  
 And issues forth when day appears. (19)

Beyond this life unmanifest,  
 There is one more unmanifest,—  
 The Eternal that can never die  
 When perish all the creatures here. (20)

The changeless and the unmanifest  
 Is also called the highest goal;  
 That is my own supreme abode;  
 Attaining which, doth none return. (21)

The Lord supreme may be attained  
 By worship unto Him alone—  
 In whom do creatures all abide,—  
 By whom is life pervaded all. (22)

And now, O best of Bharata race,  
 I'll tell thee when the Yogis pass,—  
 And parting from the world, return,  
 Or else when they return no more. (23)

Fire, light, and day, the bright fortnight,  
 The Sun's six months of northern path,—  
 In these departing from the world,  
 The Brahma-knowers to Brahma go. (24)

And smoke and night, the dark fortnight,  
 The Sun's six months of southern path,—  
 Departing then, the Yogis goes  
 To Moon's abode, and then returns. (25)

These are the paths,—the bright and dark,—  
 Deemed as eternal in this world ;  
 By the one he goes and ne'er returns,—  
 By the other comes he back again. (26)

Knowing these paths, O Pritha's son,  
 Deluded can no Yogi be ;  
 Therefore be, O Arjuna,  
 At all times steady in thy Yoga. (27)

What holy fruit can be obtained by alms,  
 Or Vedas, penances, and sacrifice,—  
 The Yogi, knowing this, excels it all,  
 And gains that place, primeval and supreme. (28)

204. CHAPTER IX.

YOGA IN RELATION TO THE SECRET OF RAJAS.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID

AND now to thee, the uncarping one,  
 Will I declare this mighty truth,—  
 Knowledge, experience most profound,  
 By which from ill wilt thou be free. (1)

Mysterious, kingly knowledge this,—  
 Highest of all that purify ;  
 Perceived by senses, righteous truth,  
 Easy to practise, changeless all. (2)

But in this righteous truth who have  
 No faith, O scorcher of thy foes,  
 Not reaching me, do they return  
 To pathways of this mortal world. (3)

By me pervaded is this world  
 All in my form unmanifest ;  
 Within me all the creatures dwell,  
 But not in them do I abide. (4)

- Nor yet do creatures dwell in me :  
 Behold my power of Yoga divine !  
 My Soul createth and supports,—  
 And yet in them I do not dwell. (5)
- As mighty air that everywhere  
 Doth always move, in Ether rests,  
 Know thou that even so do all  
 The creatures born within me bide. (6)
- When ends an age of Time, return  
 All creatures to my Prakṛiti.  
 And when begins a newer age,  
 Do I create them all again. (7)
- Having recourse to Prakṛiti,  
 Do I create again, again,  
 This multitude of beings all,—  
 Helpless under my Prakṛiti. (8)
- Nor ever do these actions all  
 Bind me, O thou Dhananjaya !  
 For unattached and unconcerned  
 Do I remain amidst them all. (9)
- And Prakṛiti, through my control,  
 Bears all that move or do not move ;  
 Because of this, O Kuntī's son,  
 Revolveth all the universe. (10)
- The foolish disregard me when  
 A human form do I assume ;  
 My nature know they not supreme,—  
 The mighty Lord of beings all. (11)
- And vain their hopes, and vain their deeds,  
 Their knowledge vain, and vain their mind ;  
 They have delusive Prakṛiti  
 Of Rakshasas and demons born. (12)

The high-souled ones, O *Pritha*'s son,  
 Possessed of *Prakṛiti* divine,—  
 They worship me with single mind,—  
 The changeless source of beings all. (13)

And always glorifying me,  
 And striving with a firm resolve,  
 Saluting me with reverence,  
 And steadfast, ever worship me. (14)

Others there are who worship me  
 With sacrifice of knowledge all;—  
 As one, as many, and apart,  
 With face directed everywhere. (15)

I'm worship and the sacrifice,  
 The offering, and the sacred herbs  
 And prayers and butter clarified;  
 And fire, and burnt oblation I. (16)

I am the father of the world,  
 Mother, creator, ancient sire,  
 The purifier, who should be known,—  
 And *Om*, *Rik*, *Sama*, and *Yajur* all; (17)

The goal, sustainer, witness, Lord,  
 The refuge, and abode, and friend;  
 The source, support, and final end;  
 The store-house, and eternal seed. (18)

And I give heat, and I withhold,  
 And issue forth, the showers of rain;  
 And death and immortality,  
 And being and non-being I. (19)

The knowers of *Vedas*, purified of sin,  
 Drink *Soma*, offer sacrifice, and pray  
 For path to Heaven, and reach the holy world  
 Of *Devas*' Lord, and have their joy divine. (20)



Having enjoyed that great and heavenly world,  
Their merit ended, to this mortal life  
They come, and following the threefold Dharma,  
Desiring their desires, they come and go. (21)

But those who worship me alone,  
Thinking of me, and no one else,  
To them, the steadfast, I give all  
They need, preserve what they possess. (22)

And e'en those devotees endued  
With faith, who worship other gods,  
Worship me only, but opposed  
To ordinance, O Kunti's son. (23)

For I the enjoyer am alone,  
And Lord of sacrifices all;  
But as they do not understand  
Me truly, therefore do they fall. (24)

To Devas go their devotees;  
Of manes to the manes go;  
To elements their worshippers;  
But come my devotees to me. (25)

Who with devotion offers me  
A leaf, flower, fruit, or water pure,—  
That, offered with devotion, I  
Accept of him of striving soul. (26)

Whatever dost thou do or eat,  
Or sacrifice, or give away,  
Or penance make, O Kunti's son,  
Do as an offering unto me. (27)

And so from good and evil fruit,  
That actions bear, wilt thou be free;  
Renouncing everything in Yoga,  
Wilt thou be free and come to me. (28)

I am alike to beings all ;  
 Hateful to me is none, or dear ;  
 But those who worship me alone,  
 They are in me and I in them. (29)  
 E'en if a sinner worship me,—  
 Devoted unto me alone,—  
 He should be deemed as good indeed,  
 Because he rightly hath resolved. (30)  
 His soul is filled with righteousness,  
 And he attains to lasting peace ;  
 For certain know, my devotee  
 Is ne'er destroyed, O Kuntî's son. (31)  
 For taking refuge into me,  
 E'en those who are of sinful birth,—  
 Women and Vaisyas, *Sudras* too,—  
 They all attain to goal supreme. (32)  
 Then how much more my devotees,—  
*Brahmanas* and royal *Rishis* all !  
 So having come into this world,—  
 Unhappy, transient,—worship me. (33)  
 Worship me, fill thy mind with me,  
 Adore, make sacrifice to me ;  
 With steadfast soul, make me thy goal,  
 And so wilt thou come unto me. (34)

## 205. CHAPTER X.

## YOGA IN RELATION TO A GLIMPSE OF DIVINE GLORY.

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

AGAIN, O thou of mighty arms,  
 Listen to my word supreme,  
 Which I, desiring but thy good,  
 Will tell thee who art glad to hear. (1)

Neither the host of Devas all,  
 Nor of the Rishis great, can know  
 My origin, for I the source  
 Of Devas and the Rishis all. (2)

Who knows me as without a source,  
 Unborn, the Lord of all the worlds,  
 Without delusion is he all  
 Among the mortals, free from sin. (3)

Buddhi, and non-delusion, truth,  
 Restraint, forgiveness, knowledge, peace,  
 Pleasure and pain, and birth and death,  
 And fearlessness, and also fear; (4)  
 Harmlessness, evenness, content,  
 Penance and alms, disgrace and fame,—  
 These are the different qualities  
 Of beings that arise from me. (5)

The seven great Rishis, ancient Four,  
 And Manus too, akin to me,—  
 Are born but of my Mind; from them  
 Arise all people in the world. (6)

In essence he who knows this Yoga,  
 And forms made manifest of me,  
 Is established in unwavering Yoga,—  
 There is no doubt about it all. (7)

I am the origin of all;  
 From me does everything evolve;  
 The wise who understand this truth,  
 In essence always worship me. (8)

Thinking of me, each teaching each,  
 Their life-breaths all absorbed in me,  
 And always speaking of me, they  
 Are satisfied and full of joy. (9)

To them, devoted e'er to me,  
Who worship me with constant love,  
I give that Buddhi-Yoga of mine.  
By which they all come unto me. (10)

Out of compassion for them, I,  
Abiding in their soul, destroy  
The darkness born of ignorance  
With radiant lamp of knowledge true. (11)

## ARJUNA SAID

Brahma supreme, the goal supreme,  
And purifier supreme art thou ;—  
The eternal Being, and divine,  
The first, unborn, pervading all. (12)

The Rishis all so speak of thee,  
And Nārada Rishi too, divine ;  
And Asita, Devala, and so Vyāsa ;  
And now thyself dost tell me so. (13)

And I believe, O Kesava,  
That all that thou hast said is true ;  
Nor Devas nor the Danavas  
Can know thee manifest, O Lord. (14)

Thyself, by thyself alone,  
Thou knowest, O thou Lord supreme !  
O source of beings, and their Lord !  
The Lord of Devas and the world ! (15)

Be pleased, without reserve, to tell  
Of thy chief attributes divine,  
By means of which dost thou, O Lord,  
Abide, pervading all the worlds. (16)

Say, how can I, O *Yogi*, know  
 Thee, meditating e'er on thee?  
 And in what different forms, O Lord,  
 May I upon thee meditate? (17)

Tell me again in detail thou  
 Thy power of Yoga and attributes,—  
 For listening to thy nectared speech  
 I never can be satisfied. (18)

#### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

O best of Kurus, I shall tell  
 Thee of my attributes divine,—  
 The chief of them,—for there's no end  
 Unto my forms made manifest. (19)

I am the soul, O *Gudakesa*,  
 Dwelling within the hearts of all;  
 The source and end of everything,—  
 And middle too of creatures I. (20)

And *Vishnu* of *Adityas* I;  
 Of those that shine, the radiant Sun;  
*Marichi* of *Maruts* am I;  
 Of lunar mansions I the Moon. (21)

Of *Vedas* I am *Sama Veda*;  
 And *Indra* of the *Devas* I;  
 Of senses all am I the Mind;  
 And Consciousness of beings I. (22)

And *Sankara* of the *Rudras* I;  
*Kuvera* of *Yakshas*, *Rakshasas*;  
 And of the *Vasus*, *Pavaka*;  
 And *Meru* of the mountains I. (23)

And know me, O thou *Pritha's* son,  
 The chief of priests, *Brihaspati* ;  
 And I am *Skanda* of generals all ;  
 And *Ocean* of the waters too. (24)

*Bhṛigu* am I of *Rishis* great ;  
 Of words am I the syllable *Om* ;  
 Of sacrifices *Japa* am I ;  
*Himalaya* of moveless things. (25)

And *Asvattha* of the trees am I ;  
*Nārada* of *Rishis*, shining ones ;  
 And *Chitraratha* of *Gandharvas* ;  
 And *Kapila* sage of *Siddhas* I. (26)

And know me as the nectar-born,  
*Uchhaisravas* of horses, too ;  
 And *Airavata* of elephants ;  
 And *Monarch* of all men am I. (27)

Of weapons I the thunderbolt ;  
 And *Kāmadhuk* of cows am I ;  
 And *Kandarpa* of creators I ;  
 Of serpents I am *Vasuki*. (28)

And of the snakes *Anant* am I ;  
*Varuna* of water-creatures too ;  
 Of manes I am *Aryaman* ;  
 And *Yama* of the self-controlled. (29)

Of demons too I am *Prahlada* ;  
 And *Time* of measurers am I ;  
 Of beasts I am the lord of beasts ;  
 And *Vainateya* of birds am I. (30)

And I am *Wind* of those that blow ;  
 And *Rama* of warriors am I ;  
 Of fishes too I am the *Shark* ;  
 And *Ganga* of the streams am I. (31)

The source, the middle, and the end  
 Am I of all created things ;  
 Of science, science of the Soul ;  
 And argument of arguers. (32)

Of letters I the letter A ;  
 And copulative of compounds ;  
 And I am deathless Time, and I  
 Creator, facing every way. (33)

And I am Death that seizeth all ;  
 And source of all that is to be ;  
 Of female virtues,—fortune, fame,  
 Forgiveness, memory, wisdom, speech. (34)

And *Brihatsama* of *Saman* hymns ;  
 Of metres *Gayatri* am I ;  
 And *Margasirsha* am I of months ;  
 Of seasons flowery season I. (35)

Of cheats am I the game of dice ;  
 And glory of the glorious I ;  
 And victory I, and effort I ;  
 And *Sattva* of the *Sattvic* I. (36)

Of *Vrishnis* I am *Vasudeva* ;  
*Dhananjaya* of the *Pandavas* ;  
 And *Vyasa* am I of *Munis* all ;  
 Of sages *Usana*, the bard. (37)

Restraint of the restrainers I ;  
 Of victory-seekers polity ;  
 And silence too of secrets I ;  
 And knowledge of the knowers too. (38)

Whatever be the seed of things,  
 That too am I, O *Arjuna* ;  
 Nothing that moves or does not move  
 Without me ever can there be. (39)

There is no end, O Arjuna,  
Unto my glorious forms divine;  
What I have said is but a part  
Of all my countless attributes. (40)

Whatever thing there is of power,  
Of greatness and of glory too,—  
Know that it is, O Arjuna,  
Born of a portion of my light. (41)

But what avails, O Arjuna,  
These many attributes to know?—  
I stand, supporting all the worlds  
With but a portion of myself. (42)

## 206. CHAPTER XI.

YOGA IN RELATION TO A VISION OF THE UNIVERSAL  
FORM

## ARJUNA SAID

THIS secret of the soul supreme,  
Out of compassion unto me  
That thou hast told, hath cast away  
All this delusion from my mind. (1)

I've heard at length, O lotus-eyed,  
The origin and end of things  
From thy own self, and also all  
Thy greatness inexhaustible. (2)

So is it all, O Lord supreme,  
E'en as thou hast declared to me;  
And now I wish to see thy form  
Divine, O thou Supreme Soul. (3)



If thou, O Lord, dost think that I  
 Can bear to see thy form divine,  
 Then do thou show, O Lord of Yoga,  
 Thy soul eternal unto me. (4)

#### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Behold, O Pritha's son, my form,  
 In hundreds and in thousands too ;—  
 Of different kinds, and all divine,  
 Of various colours, various shapes. (5)

See Rudras, Vasus, Adityas,  
 And Asvins two, and Maruts all ;  
 And many wonders never seen  
 Before this all, O Bharata. (6)

And in my body, Gudakesa,  
 Behold thou all the universe,—  
 The movable, immovable,—  
 With aught else thou dost wish to see. (7)

But verily thou hast no power  
 To see me with these eyes of thine ;  
 A sight divine I give to thee,—  
 Behold my Yoga of sovereign power ! (8)

#### SANJAYA SAID

And having spoken thus, O king,  
 Hari, the mighty Lord of Yoga,  
 Then to the son of Pritha showed  
 His glorious form, supreme, divine. (9)

With many mouths, and many eyes,  
 And many a form of wondrous sight,  
 And many an ornament divine,  
 And many weapons lifted high. (10)

With garlands and with clothes divine,  
And unguents all divine perfumed,  
And full of splendour, wonderful,  
Boundless, with face turned everywhere.(11)

If the splendour of a thousand suns  
At once should rise up in the sky,  
That would indeed be like the light  
And glory of that mighty soul. (12)

There then the son of *Pandu* saw  
Within the body of the Lord  
Of Devas, all the universe,  
Together and in many parts. (13)

Then filled with wonder, and with hair  
Standing on end, *Dhananjaya*,  
Bent down his head before the Lord,  
And spake to him with folded hands.(14)

#### ARJUNA SAID

I see all Devas in thy body, Lord !  
And all the groups of various beings see ;  
*Brahma*, the Lord, upon his lotus throne ;  
Celestial serpents, and the *Rishis* all. (15)

I see thy boundless form on every side,  
Of countless bosoms, countless arms and eyes;  
Nor end, nor middle, nor thy source I see,—  
O Lord of all, of universal form. (16)

With discus, mace, and diadem I behold,—  
A mass of radiance, shining everywhere,  
So hard to gaze at, blazing all around,  
Like burning sun or fire, and measureless.(17)

Deathless thou art, supremest Lord to know ;  
 The mighty refuge of the universe ;  
 Eternal Dharma's changeless guardian thou ;  
 Thou art the ancient Being, I believe. (18)

Thou hast no middle, end, nor any source ;  
 Of infinite power,—the Sun and Moon thine eyes ;  
 Of countless arms,—thy mouth a blazing fire,  
 Kindling with glory all the universe. (19)

And all the space that lies 'tween heaven and earth,  
 And quarters, all is filled by thee alone ;  
 Thy wondrous, awful form, O high-souled one,  
 The three worlds see and tremble in affright.(20)

The hosts of gods all enter into thee ;  
 And some in fear adore with folded palms ;  
 The Rishis great and Siddhas cry " All hail ! "—  
 And praise thee so with many glorious hymns.(21)

And Rudras, Vasus, Sādhyas, Adityas,  
 And Visvas, Maruts, Ushmapas, and Asvins,  
 Asuras, Siddhas, Yakshas, Gandharvas,—  
 Are gazing on thee, full of wonder all. (22)

Thy glorious form, with many mouths and eyes,  
 And thighs, and feet, and arms, O mighty one,  
 With many bosoms, many fearful teeth,  
 The world beholds and trembles,—so do I.(23)

Thou touchest heaven, shining with many hues,  
 With open mouths, and large and blazing eyes ;  
 Beholding thee, my soul is filled with fear,—

And I have left, O Vishnu, strength nor peace.(24)

Seeing thy mouths, all set with fearful jaws,  
 Like fires that blaze when all the world hath end,—

I see nor space around, nor shelter find ;—

Mercy, O Lord, refuge of all the worlds ! (25)

And all the sons of Dhritarashtra here,  
 With all the hosts of monarchs of the earth,—  
 And Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Suta's son,  
 With all the mighty warriors of our hosts,—(26)

All quickly rush into thy open mouths,  
 With fearful jaws, so awful to behold;  
 And some are seen stuck in between thy teeth,  
 And there their heads are crushed to powder all. (27)

As rivers in their many waters' mass  
 All turn their face towards the sea and flow,  
 So do these heroes in the world of men  
 Enter thy mouths, blazing on every side. (28)

As moths into a burning lamp in haste  
 Enter, and perish in a moment all,—  
 So do these people rush into thy mouths  
 Quickly, and to their destruction fall. (29)

Thou swallow'st up the worlds with flaming mouths  
 And lickest them again on every side.  
 Thy piercing rays of glory fill the world  
 With burning radiance, Vishnu, everywhere. (30)

Who art thou, tell me, in this awful form?  
 I worship thee!—Be pleased, O Lord supreme!  
 I wish to know thee, O primeval one;  
 Thy acts and ends I do not understand. (31)

#### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Death am I, destroyer of the worlds,  
 Made manifest on earth to slay mankind.  
 Even without thee, know, these warriors all,  
 Arrayed in hostile ranks, shall cease to be. (32)

Therefore arise, and win thy great renown ;  
 Conquer thy foes, enjoy the happy realms !  
 By me already all these have been slain ;  
 Be thou the instrument, O Arjuna. (33)

Drona, and Bhîshma, and Jayadratha,  
 Karna, and other mighty warriors too,  
 Are slain by me. Slay them, nor be distressed ;  
 Fight thou, and quell thy foemen in the field. (34)

#### SANJAYA SAID

Hearing these words of Kesava, trembling all,  
 With folded hands, Arjuna, who wears a crown,  
 Saluting low, to Krishna spake again,  
 In a choked voice, all overwhelmed with fear. (35)

#### ARJUNA SAID

Rightly, O Hrishikesa, the universe  
 Delighteth and rejoiceth in thy praise.  
 The Rakshasas to every quarter fly  
 In fear, the hosts of Siddhas bow to thee. (36)

And why, O high-souled one, should they not bow ?  
 Greater than Brahma,—nay, his source art thou.  
 The infinite Lord of Devas, home of worlds ;  
 Immortal, Sat, Asat, and mightier still ! (37)

Primeval Deva, the ancient Man art thou ;  
 And thou the refuge of the world supreme.  
 And knower thou, and known,—the highest goal ;  
 Of infinite form, filling the universe. (38)

And Yama, Varuna, Agni, Air, and Moon,  
 Prajapati, and great-grandfather thou ;  
 All hail to thee, a thousand times all hail !  
 Hail, hail to thee, again, again, all hail ! (39)

Obeisance from before and from behind,  
 On every side obeisance, O thou All!  
 Of infinite power, of infinite glory thou,—  
 Pervading all, and therefore thou art All! (40)

Thinking of thee as friend, presumptuously,  
 If I have called thee *Kṛishna*, *Yadava*, friend,—  
 Unconscious of thy glory that I see,—

Or carelessly, or fondly in my love;— (41)  
 And if in sport I have not honoured thee,

At play, reposing, sitting, or at meals,—  
 Alone, or else with others,—I implore,—

Forgive my error, O thou boundless one! (42)  
 Thou sire of all that move or do not move;

Worthy of worship, greater than the great;  
 Thou hast no equal in the threefold world;

Who can excel thee, O thou matchless one! (43)  
 My body thus before thee I prostrate,

And crave forgiveness, O thou Lord supreme!  
 As father with a son, as friend with friend,

As a lover with his love, so bear with me! (44)  
 I joy to see I had not seen before;

And yet my mind is trembling all in fear;  
 Let me behold thy other form, O Lord!

Have mercy, Lord, O refuge of the world! (45)  
 With crown and mace, and discus in thy hand,  
 Again I wish to see thee, as before;

Assume that same four-armed form again,—  
 O thou of thousand forms, of all the forms! (46)

#### THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Through my favour, Arjuna, have I shown,  
 By power of Yoga, this glorious form supreme;—  
 Primeval, universal, infinite,—  
 Which none but thee hath ever seen before. (47)

Neither by Vedas' study, sacrifice,  
 Nor alms, nor actions, penances austere,  
 May I be seen within this world of men,  
 By any in this form which thou hast seen. (48)

Be not bewildered, be not thou afraid,  
 For having seen this awful form of mine ;  
 Dispel thy fear, and with a joyous mind  
 Behold again as I am wont to be. (49)

## SANJAYA SAID

Then Krishna, speaking thus to Arjuna, showed  
 Again to him his own more gentle form,  
 And comforted the fearful one thereby.  
 The Lord supreme assumed a gentle form. (50)

## ARJUNA SAID

Having beheld thy human form,  
 So gentle, O Janardana,  
 My mind is now composed again,  
 And I have gained my native peace. (51)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

'Tis hard indeed to see this form  
 Of mine, which thou hast seen to-day ;  
 The Devas do for ever long  
 To see me in this form of mine. (52)

Neither by Vedas, nor by gifts,  
 Nor penance, nor yet sacrifice,  
 Can I be visioned in this form,  
 Even as thou hast seen to-day. (53)

By prayer to me alone may I  
 Be visioned, Arjuna, in this form,  
 And known and seen in essence true,  
 And entered into, mighty one. (54)

Who acts for me, whose goal am I,  
All unattached, who prays to me,  
And beareth enmity to none,—  
He comes to me, O *Pandava*. (55)

## 207. CHAPTER XII.

## YOGA IN RELATION TO DEVOTION.

## ARJUNA SAID

THOSE ever-steadfast devotees,  
Who worship thee, and those who seek  
The Immortal and Unmanifest,—  
Who are more truly versed in Yoga? (1)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Who think of me with fixed mind,  
And worship me devotedly,  
And full of highest faith, I deem  
The best of all in Yoga are they. (2)

The Immortal, Indestructible,  
Who worship, and the Unmanifest,  
Unthinkable, Unchangeable,  
Eternal, fixed, and everywhere,— (3)

With senses all under control,  
With *Buddhi* constant all around,  
Intent on doing good to all,—  
They also do attain to me. (4)

Only more difficult their task,  
Who think of the Unmanifest;  
The goal of the Unmanifest  
Is hard for the embodied ones. (5)



But those who make me as their goal,  
 Renouncing all their deeds to me,  
 And worship me alone with Yoga,  
 Thinking of nothing else besides ; (6)

Whose mind is set on me alone,—  
 Do I, O son of *Pritha*, soon  
 Deliver from this ocean deep  
 Of mortal life on earth below. (7)

So do thou fix thy mind on me  
 And place thy *Buddhi* in me thou ;  
 And so wilt thou without a doubt  
 Abide in me for evermore. (8)

But if thou canst not fix thy mind  
 On me alone unwaveringly,  
 Then meditate on me by Yoga,  
 And seek me, O *Dhananjaya*. (9)

And if thou canst not meditate,  
 Perform thou actions for my sake ;  
 Performing actions for my sake,  
 Wilt thou attain to perfect life. (10)

If even this thou canst not do,  
 Then seek thou refuge in my Yoga ;  
 And with thy soul under control,  
 Renounce the fruits of actions all. (11)

More great than effort knowledge is ;  
 Than knowledge, meditation more ;  
 Renouncing fruit of action's more  
 Than meditation,—giving peace. (12)

Who beareth hatred unto none,  
 Is friendly and compassionate,  
 And free from selfishness and pride,  
 Patient, the same in joy and pain;— (13)

Content, and always following Yoga,  
With soul controlled, and firm resolve,  
With mind and Buddhi fixed on me,—  
Dear is that devotee to me. (14)

By whom the world is not disturbed,  
Nor by the world disturbed is he,  
From agitation, fear, and joy,  
And envy free,— is dear to me. (15)

And pure and independent he,  
Keen, undisturbed, and undistressed,  
Renouncing all his actions too,—  
Dear is that devotee to me. (16)

Who hateth not, rejoiceth not,  
And grieveth not, nor hath desire,  
Renouncing good and evil all,—  
Dear is that devotee to me. (17)

Alike is he to friend and foe,  
Alike in honour and disgrace;  
In cold and heat, and joy and pain  
Alike, and from attachment free; (18)

Alike in censure and in praise,  
Silent, content with what may chance,  
Without a home, with steady mind,—  
Dear is that devotee to me. (19)

Who follow this immortal Dharma,  
As I have now described to thee,  
Endued with faith, and I their goal,—  
Dear are those devotees to me. (20)

208. CHAPTER XIII.

YOGA IN RELATION TO THE FIELD AND KNOWER  
OF THE FIELD.

ARJUNA SAID

OF Purusha and Prakriti,  
The Field and Knower of the Field,  
And knowledge, and the objects known,  
I wish to know, O Kesava.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID

This body, verily is described  
O son of Kunti, as the Field;  
Who knoweth this is called by those  
Who know, as Knower of the Field. (1)

And understand, O Arjuna, thou,  
I am the Knower of all the Fields;  
And that's true knowledge which relates  
To Field and Knower of the Field. (2)

What is the Field, and of what kind,  
What are its changes, whence it is,  
And what the Knower, and what his powers,  
Hear now from me that briefly thou. (3)

Rishis have sung of this before  
In various ways and many hymns,  
In texts that tell of Brahma great,—  
Convincing, full of reason all. (4)

The Ego and the elements,  
Buddhi, and the Unmanifest,  
The senses ten, and yet one more,  
And objects of the senses five; (5)

Desire, aversion, pleasure, pain,  
The body, consciousness, and will,—  
Thus is described the Field in brief,  
With changes that it undergoes. (6)

Humility, sincerity,  
Non-killing, patience, honesty,  
The teacher's service, purity,  
And steadiness, and self-control ; (7)

Freedom from objects of the sense,  
Freedom from taint of egoism,  
Reflection on the ills of birth,  
Disease and pain, and age and death ; (8)

Detachment, absence of concern  
With son, wife, home, and all the rest,  
And constant evenness of mind  
At pleasant and unpleasant things ; (9)

Devotion firm to me alone,  
With thought of nothing else besides,  
Resort to lonely places pure,  
Distaste for company of men ; (10)

Pursuit of knowledge of the soul,  
And Truth,—the end of knowledge all,—  
This is called knowledge,—all that is  
Opposed to this, is ignorance. (11)

I'll tell thee now what should be known,  
By which is gained immortal bliss,—  
The highest Brahma, without a source,  
And called nor Sat, nor Asat he. (12)

With hands and feet, it's everywhere,  
With eyes, head, face on every side ;—  
And everywhere it hath its ears,  
And stands pervading everything. (13)

Shining with Gunas of the sense,  
 And yet devoid of senses all,  
 Detached and yet sustaining life,  
 From Gunas free, yet full of love; (14)

Within all beings and without,  
 Immovable and movable,  
 Subtle, and so unknowable,  
 It stands afar, and yet is near. (15)

Impartible, yet it remains  
 As if divided in all things;  
 It's the supporter of all life,  
 Creating and devouring all. (16)

It's said to be the light of lights,  
 Beyond the realm of darkness far;  
 Knowledge, its goal, and what is known,  
 And dwelling in the hearts of all. (17)

I've told thee briefly what's the Field,  
 And knowledge, and what should be known  
 And knowing this my devotee  
 Is fitted to attain to me. (18)

Know Purusha and Prakriti  
 Are both without a beginning.  
 The Gunas and their changes all—  
 Know they are born of Prakriti. (19)

Of actor, action, and its means  
 The moving cause is Prakriti;  
 In feeling pain and pleasure both  
 Is Purusha the moving cause. (20)

The Purusha in Prakriti  
 Enjoys the Gunas of it born;  
 And his attachment to them is  
 The cause of good and evil birth. (21)

The highest Purusha in this frame  
Is witness and permitter called;  
Enjoyer and supporter too;  
The mighty Lord, the highest soul. (22)

And he who knoweth Purusha,  
And, with its Gunas, Prakṛiti,  
Whatever be his mode of life,  
He is not born on earth again. (23)

By meditation, by the soul,  
Some see the soul within the soul;  
And some again by Sāukhya-Yoga;  
Others by Yoga of Action see. (24)

Others again, not knowing this,  
Worship, from others as they hear;  
And even they cross over death,  
Listening to all that they have heard. (25)

Whatever creature that is born,  
Immovable or movable,  
From union, know it thou to be,  
Of Field and Knower of the Field. (26)

He seeth truly who doth see  
The Lord supreme in everything,—  
Abiding equally in all,—  
Deathless in all the things of death. (27)

Seeing the Lord in everything,  
Abiding equally in all,—  
He injures not his soul by soul,  
And so attains to goal supreme. (28)

He seeth truly who doth see  
That everywhere all actions are  
Performed by Prakṛiti alone,  
And that the soul is actionless. (29)

All separate beings when he sees  
Existing in the One alone,  
And rising all from that alone,—  
Then he to Brahma doth attain. (30)

This Soul supreme that cannot die,  
Without a source, from Gunas free,  
Though dwelling in each bodily frame,  
Performs no actions, hath no taint. (31)

As Ether, by its subtlety,  
Receives no taint, pervading all,  
Abiding in each body,—so  
The soul receiveth never a taint. (32)

A single Sun illuminates  
O Bharata, the world entire;  
E'en so the dweller in the Field  
Illuminates the Field entire. (33)

With eye of knowledge those who see  
The Field and Knower of the Field,  
And freedom from Prakriti gain,—  
They reach unto the highest goal. (34)

## 209. CHAPTER XIV.

YOGA IN RELATION TO THE DIVISION OF THREE  
GUNAS.

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

AGAIN will I declare to thee  
Knowledge, above all knowledge, best;  
The sages, knowing which, attain  
To highest goal beyond this life. (1)

Abiding in this knowledge, they,  
Attaining to my essence, all,  
At life's creation are not born,  
Nor troubled when destruction comes. (2)

My womb is Brahma's Prakriti,  
And in that do I cast my seed ;  
And know, the birth of beings all  
Ariseth thence, O Bharata. (3)

O son of Kuntī, whatever forms  
From all the wombs that are produced,—  
Their womb is Brahma's Prakriti,  
And their seed-giving Father I. (4)

And Sattva, Rajas, Tamas,— these  
Are Gunas born of Prakriti ;  
Within the body binding fast  
The deathless soul, O mighty one. (5)

And Sattva, luminous and free  
From evil, and without a taint,  
Bindeth the soul, O sinless one,  
With bonds of knowledge and of joy.(6)

Know Rajas unto passion kin,  
Born of attachment and desire,—  
Bindeth the embodied one with bonds  
Of action, O thou Kuntī's son. (7)

Know Tamas, born of ignorance,  
Deluding all the embodied ones,—  
With heedlessness and indolence,  
And sleep it binds, O Bharata. (8)

Sattva doth link the soul to joy ;  
Rajas to action, Bharata ;  
Tamas all knowledge doth enshroud,  
And links the soul to heedlessness. (9)

And sometimes Sattva doth prevail,  
Repressing Rajas, Tamas both ;  
Rajas, repressing Tamas, Sattva ;  
And Tamas, Sattva and Rajas both.(10)



When through the open portals all  
 Of body, shineth all around,  
 The light of knowledge, then 'tis known  
 That Sattva doth predominate. (11)

And undertaking actions, greed,  
 Activity, unrest, desire,—  
 Know these arise, O Bhārata,  
 When Rajas doth predominate. (12)

Inaction, darkness all around,  
 Delusion fond, and heedlessness,—  
 O joy of Kurus, know they rise  
 When Tamas doth predominate. (13)

If the embodied one departs  
 When Sattva doth predominate,  
 To spotless regions he attains  
 Of those who worship the Supreme. (14)

And if he dies when Rajas rules,  
 'Mong action-seekers he is born;  
 And if, when Tamas doth prevail,  
 His birth is in the womb of fools. (15)

The fruit of actions well performed  
 Is Sattvic said to be and pure;  
 The fruit of Rajas is but pain;  
 And ignorance is Tamas' fruit. (16)

From Sattva knowledge doth arise;  
 From Rajas avarice is born;  
 Delusion fond and heedlessness  
 And ignorance doth Tamas yield. (17)

The Sattva-dwellers upward go;  
 The Rājasic have middle place;  
 And following the lowest path,  
 Downward the Tamasic decline. (18)

And when the seer doth see indeed  
No actor save the Gunas three,  
And knoweth Him who is beyond  
The Gunas, he attains to me. (19)

The embodied one, transcending these  
Three Gunas, whence all bodies rise,  
Is freed from age, pain, birth and death,  
And gaineth immortality. (20)

## ARJUNA SAID

What are the marks of him, O Lord,  
Who crosses o'er these Gunas three?  
What is his conduct, how doth he  
Cross over all the Gunas three? (21)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Who hates nor light, nor action, nor  
Delusion fond, O *Pandava*,  
When they are present, nor desires  
To have them when they cease to be; (22)

Who, sitting like one unconcerned,  
Is not by Gunas ever moved;  
And knowing how the Gunas act,  
Is steady and unwavering; (23)

Centred within, and firm, alike  
In joy and pain, or praise or blame,  
Alike to him earth, stone, and gold,  
And pleasant or unpleasant things; (24)

Alike in honour and disgrace;  
Alike to friend and enemy;  
Renouncing all his deeds begun,—  
He's said to have crossed the Gunas three. (25)

Who worships me with steady mind,  
 Devotion in the light of Yoga,—  
 Crossing o'er Gunas, doth deserve  
 With Brahma to be made as one. (26)

For I am Brahma's true abode,—  
 The immortal and immutable ;—  
 Of everlasting Dharma I,  
 And perfect joy and happiness. (27)

## 210. CHAPTER XV.

## YOGA IN RELATION TO THE SUPREME PURUSHA.

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

THEY say the eternal Asvattha  
 Hath roots above, branches below ;  
 Its foliage is the sacred hymns ;  
 Who knows it doth the Vedas know.(1)

Above, below, its branches do extend,  
 Nourished by Gunas ; and sense objects are  
 Its bursting shoots ; and in the world of men,  
 Creating actions, spread its roots below. (2)

Its real form can never be perceived ;  
 Nor end, nor source, nor what it rests upon ;  
 Cutting with weapons of detachment strong  
 This Asvattha, with roots so firmly fixed,—(3)

A person seeketh for that happy goal,  
 Attaining which, doth no one thence return ;  
 I go unto that primal Man alone

From whom this ancient stream of life arose. (4)  
 From pride, delusion, and attachment free,  
 From pairs of opposites, of joy and pain,  
 Abiding in the soul,— with no desire,—  
 The undeluded reach the eternal goal. (5)

The sun does not illumine it ;  
Nor yet the light of Moon or fire ;—  
And that is my supreme abode,—  
Attaining which, doth none return. (6)

An eternal portion of my self  
Becomes a soul in the world of life,  
Drawing the mind and senses five,  
Abiding all in Prakriti. (7)

And when the Lord a body takes,  
Or when he leaves it here again,  
He taketh these with him and goes,—  
As perfumes Wind from their retreats. (8)

Presiding o'er the ear and eye,  
And sense of touch and taste and smell,  
And also mind, he doth enjoy  
The objects of the senses all. (9)

Quitting a form, or dwelling there,  
Possessed of Gunas, joying in life,—  
The foolish ones see not the Lord,—  
Those who have eyes of wisdom see. (10)

The Yogis, striving, see the Lord,  
Abiding in the inmost soul ;  
But heedless ones, whose soul is not  
Refined, though striving, cannot see. (11)

The light that dwelleth in the Sun,  
Illumining the world entire,—  
The light that's in the Moon and fire,—  
Know that this light is all from me. (12)

Entering the earth, do I support  
All beings with my energy ;  
And I become the dewy Moon,  
And nourish all the herbs below. (13)

And I become the fire of life,  
 Within the frame of all who breathe;  
 And linked with breath that comes and goes,  
 Do I digest the fourfold food. (14)

And I abide within the hearts of all;  
 From me is memory, knowledge, and its loss;  
 And me alone do all the Vedas know;—  
 Vedānta's author, Vedas' knower am I. (15)

There are two Purushas in the world,—  
 The mortal and immortal one;  
 The elements are mortal all,—  
 The highest is the immortal one. (16)

There's yet a greater Purusha still,—  
 The highest Purusha he is called,—  
 Within the three worlds who abides,—  
 The changeless Lord, sustaining all. (17)

As I transcend the mortal one,  
 And the immortal one excel,  
 So in this world and Vedas all  
 As highest Purusha I am known. (18)

And he who from delusion free,  
 As highest Purusha knoweth me,  
 He, knowing all, doth worship me,  
 In every way, O Bharata. (19)

And thus have I, O sinless one,  
 Declared this knowledge most profound;  
 Who knows, is wise, and he hath done  
 His duties all, O Bharata. (20)

“The world,” they say, “is void of truth,  
 Or moral principles, or God ;  
 Produced by union of the sex,—  
 Desire and lust its only cause.” (8)

Holding this view, these ruined souls,  
 Of little Buddhi, fearful deeds,  
 Arise as enemies of all  
 For the destruction of the world. (9)

Full of insatiable desires,  
 Deceit and pride and arrogance,  
 Deluded, holding views untrue,  
 And acting with impure resolve ; (10)

Beset with boundless, anxious cares,  
 That have their end in death alone,—  
 Their highest goal is lustful joy,—  
 And feeling sure that that is all ; (11)

Bound by a hundred ties of hope,  
 And given to anger and desire,  
 They strive by unjust means to gain  
 The hoards of wealth their lust to sate. (12)

“This has today been gained by me ;  
 And this desire will I obtain ;  
 This wealth is mine alone, and this  
 Will also be hereafter mine ; (13)

“This enemy has been slain by me ;  
 And others also will I slay ;  
 I am the lord, the enjoyer I ;  
 And I am perfect, happy, strong ; (14)

“I’m wealthy and of noble birth ;  
 Who else is equal unto me ?  
 I’ll give, rejoice, and sacrifice!”—  
 Deluded thus by ignorance, (15)

Bewildered so by many a thought,  
Surrounded by delusion's snare,  
Attached to pleasures of desire,  
They fall into a loathsome hell. (16)

Haughty and full of self-conceit,  
And pride and arrogance of wealth,  
They offer sacrifice in name  
For show, against all sacred rules. (17)

Possessed of egoism and power,  
And pride and anger and desire,  
In others' bodies and their own  
They hate me,—these malignant ones. (18)

These cruel and malicious ones,  
Meanest of men, of evil deeds,  
I hurl into these worlds below  
Perpetually in devilish wombs. (19)

And, born within these devilish wombs,  
Deluded so birth after birth,  
They fall into yet lower state,—  
O Kuntî's son, nor come to me. (20)

Threefold is the gate of hell,  
Destructive of the soul within,—  
Of anger, lust, and avarice;—  
So do thou from these three refrain. (21)

O Kuntî's son, the man who goes  
Beyond these gates of darkness three,  
Doth what is good to his own soul,—  
And so doth reach the goal supreme. (22)

He who, forsaking sacred rules,  
Acts under impulse of desire,  
Perfection, nor yet happiness  
He gains, nor yet the goal supreme. (23)

So let the sacred rules be thine  
 For what should not and should be done ;  
 And having known what they declare,  
 Engage in action in this world. (24)

## 212. CHAPTER XVII.

## YOGA IN RELATION TO THE THREEFOLD PATH.

## ARJUNA SAID

O KRISHNA, what's the state of those  
 Who set aside the scripture rules,  
 But offer sacrifice with faith?  
 Is Sattva, Rajas, or Tamas theirs? (1)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

The faith of all embodied ones  
 Is threefold,—of their nature born,—  
 Of Sattva, Rajas, Tamas all;—  
 And do thou hear it from me now. (2)

The faith of each, O Bharata,  
 Unto his nature doth conform ;  
 A man consisteth of his faith ;  
 But as his faith, so is the man. (3)

The Sattvic worship but the gods ;  
 Yakshas and demons Rajasic ;  
 And men of Tamas multitudes  
 Of ghosts and spirits of the dead. (4)

The men who practise penances,  
 Fierce and opposed to scripture rules,  
 Full of deceit and egoism,  
 Desire, attachment, lust and power ; (5)



And heedlessly who torture all  
The organs in their bodily frame,—  
And myself too who dwell therein,—  
Know thou to be of devilish aim. (6)

And know that food to each one dear  
Is also of a threefold kind ;  
So penance, alms, and sacrifice ;  
And hear thou their distinction now: (7)

The food, augmenting vital power,  
Health, strength, and comfort and delight,  
Sweet, savoury, pleasant, and compact,  
Is dear to those of Sattvic kind. (8)

And bitter, sour, and saltish, hot,  
And pungent, dry, and burning food,  
Producing pain, disease, and grief,  
Is held by men of Rajas dear. (9)

And food o'er-ripe and tasteless all,  
And stinking, stale, and left o'ernight,  
And all impure, and leavings too,  
Is held by men of Tamas dear. (10)

The sacrifice, by ordinance,  
Performed without desiring fruit,  
For its own sake, with mind intent,—  
Know Sattvic is that sacrifice. (11)

What is performed, desiring fruit,  
And for the sake of outward show,  
Know thou, O best of Bhārata race,  
Of Rajas is that sacrifice. (12)

Devoid of gifts to Brahmanas, food,  
Or sacred hymns, devoid of faith,  
Performed opposed to ordinance,—  
Of Tamas is that sacrifice. (13)

Worship of gods, of Brahmanas wise,  
 And teacher, purity and truth,  
 And harmlessness and chastity,—  
 Bodily penance is this called. (14)

The speech that is from sorrow free,  
 And beneficial, pleasant, true,  
 And study of the Vedas,—all  
 This is austerity of speech. (15)

Calmness of mind and kindliness,  
 And silence deep and self-control,  
 And honesty of purpose,—all  
 This is austerity of mind. (16)

This threefold penance done by men  
 Who are imbued with perfect faith,  
 Steadfast, and not desiring fruit,  
 Sattvic penance that is called. (17)

The penance practised with the aim  
 Of welcome, honour, worship, show,  
 Unsteady, and impermanent,  
 Of Rajas is that penance called. (18)

The penance born of foolish thought,  
 Practised with torture of the soul,—  
 Its object being to destroy,—  
 Of Tamas is that penance called. (19)

Verily Sattvic is that gift,  
 To proper man, who naught returns,  
 In proper place, at proper time,—  
 Given because to give is right. (20)

And what is given but with the aim  
 Of fruit, or service in return,  
 Or else is offered painfully,—  
 Of Rajas verily is that gift. (21)

That given to a worthless man,  
In worthless place, at worthless time,  
Without regard, contemptuously,  
Of Tamas verily is that gift. (22)

Threefold has Brahman been declared,—  
Described as Om and Tat and Sat ;  
All Brahmana hymns were made by him,  
And Vedas and all sacrifice. (23)

Therefore those who follow Brahma,  
As is enjoined in scriptures all,  
Uttering Om, they do their deeds,  
Of penance, gift, and sacrifice. (24)

Seekers of final freedom too,  
Renouncing all desire for fruit,  
Uttering Tad, perform their deeds  
Of penance, gift, and sacrifice. (25)

The real thing is Sat indeed,  
And verily Sat is also good ;  
And Sat, O son of Pritha, means  
A good, auspicious action done. (26)

And Sat is also steadiness  
In penance, gift, and sacrifice ;  
And verily Sat is action too  
Performed but in the name of God. (27)

Whatever is done, devoid of faith,  
Of penance, gift, and sacrifice,—  
Asat it is, O Pritha's son ;  
It's naught on earth, and naught elsewhere. (28)

## 213. CHAPTER XVIII.

## YOGA IN RELATION TO RENUNCIATION.

## ARJUNA SAID

I WISH to know, O mighty one,  
 Renunciation's truth from thee :—  
 The essence of abandonment,  
 Tell me, O slayer of Kesi, thou. (1)

## THE BLESSED LORD SAID

Renouncing actions with desire  
 Is true renunciation called ;  
 The abandonment of fruit of deeds  
 The sages call abandonment. (2)

"Renounce all actions : they are full  
 Of evil all,"—some wise men say :  
 Say others, " Penance, sacrifice,  
 And gifts should never be renounced." (3)

My final view, O Bharata,  
 Hear thou about abandonment:  
 Abandonment is said to be  
 Of threefold kind, O chief of men. (4)

Acts of penance, sacrifice  
 And gift should never be renounced,  
 And they should always be performed ;  
 By them the wise are purified. (5)

These actions too should be performed,  
 O Pritha's son, without desire  
 Of fruit, without attachment too ;  
 Such is my firm and best belief. (6)

Of actions properly controlled  
 Renunciation is not meet ;  
 And their renunciation's called  
 Of Tamas, — of delusion born. (7)

From fear of bodily trouble who  
Renounces action for its pain,—  
Of Rajas his abandonment,  
And so its fruit he doth not gain. (8)

Who acteth for he needs to do,  
Performing actions with restraint,  
Renouncing all attachment, fruit,—  
Of Sattva's his abandonment. (9)

And Sattvic's that relinquisher,  
Talented and with doubts dispelled,  
Who hateth not unpleasant deeds,  
Nor is attached to pleasant ones. (10)

The embodied ones have not the power  
All actions wholly to renounce;  
So he who doth renounce their fruit  
Is truly a renouncer called. (11)

The fruit of action is threefold,—  
Pleasant, unpleasant, and all mixed,—  
For those attached, in after life;  
But not for those who have renounced. (12)

And now, O thou of mighty arms,  
Learn from me all the causes five,  
Which have in Sankhya been declared,—  
By which all action is performed. (13)

The place of action, doer of deed,  
The various organs of the sense,  
And different functions they perform,  
And chance of action,—making five. (14)

Whatever deed a man performs,  
By means of body, speech, and mind,—  
Following Nyaya, or other thought,—  
These five are said to be its cause. (15)

This being so, he who believes

That the pure soul is actor too,—  
That person of perverted mind,  
And little Buddhi, sees awry. (16)

He who is free from egoism,

Whose Buddhi never hath a taint,  
Though slaying all these people here,  
He slayeth not, nor is he bound. (17)

Knowledge, the knower, the object known,—

Of action these the threefold cause;  
And actor, action, instruments,—  
These three all action constitute. (18)

And knowledge, action, actor,—these,

By Guna-division are threefold,  
As has by Sankhya been declared;—  
So hear thou as they truly are. (19)

By which the One, unperishing,

In every creature is perceived,—  
Inseparate in each separate thing,—  
Know Sattvic is that knowledge all. (20)

That which in every creature sees

But different things of different forms,—  
And all as separate, each from each,—  
Of Rajas is that knowledge called. (21)

Which is confined to one effect,—

Regarding it as if the whole,—  
Trivial, devoid of reason, truth,—  
Of Tamas is that knowledge called. (22)

An action from attachment free,

And love and hate, and well-controlled,  
Performed by him who seeks no fruit,—  
Of Sattva is that action called. (23)

An action done with self-conceit,  
 Performed by one who seeks desires,—  
 With painful effort,—know it thou,  
 Of Rajas is that action called. (24)

An action done beyond one's power,  
 Without regard of consequence,  
 Of loss or harm,—deludedly,—  
 Of Tamas is that action called. (25)

From ego and attachment free,  
 And full of joy and fortitude,  
 Untouched by failure or success,  
 Of Sattva is that actor called. (26)

Full of desire, and seeking fruit,  
 And greedy, cruel, and impure,  
 Affected soon by joy or grief,—  
 Of Rajas is that actor called. (27)

Unsteady, given to Prakṛiti,  
 Proud, false, malicious, indolent,  
 And melancholy too, and slow,—  
 Of Tamas is that actor called. (28)

Of Buddhi and of fortitude,  
 The triple kind, by Guṇas formed,  
 Hear, Arjuna, as I tell thee now,  
 Completely and in several parts. (29)

Which action and inaction knows,  
 What should be done and should not, fear,  
 Fearlessness, bondage, freedom too,  
 Of Sattva is that Buddhi called. (30)

Imperfectly which understands  
 Unrighteousness and righteousness,—  
 What should be done and should not, know  
 Of Rajas is that Buddhi called. (31)

Shrouded in darkness, which regards  
 Unrighteousness as righteousness,  
 Sees all things in perverted light,—  
 Of Tamas is that Buddhi called. (32)

By which the functions of the mind  
 And breath and senses are controlled,  
 Which is unswerving made by Yoga,—  
 Of Sattva is that fortitude. (33)

By which he holds, O Pritha's son,  
 To righteousness, desire, and wealth,—  
 Attached to all, and seeking fruit,—  
 Of Rajas is that fortitude. (34)

And that by which a senseless man  
 Does not give up, O Pritha's son,  
 Sleep, fear, and grief, despair, and pride,  
 Of Tamas is that fortitude. (35)

Now hear from me, O Bhārata,  
 The threefold kind of happiness,  
 By which in concentration he  
 Hath joy, and puts an end to pain. (36)

Which like to poison is at first,  
 But like to nectar in the end,—  
 Of joy of soul and Buddhi born,—  
 Of Sattva is that happiness. (37)

Of contact with sense-objects born,  
 Which like to nectar is at first,  
 But like to poison in the end,—  
 Of Rajas is that happiness. (38)

Which both at first and in the end  
 Causes delusion of the soul,—  
 Rising from sleep, sloth, heedlessness,—  
 Of Tamas is that happiness. (39)



There is no entity on earth,  
 Or else among the gods in heaven,  
 That is devoid of Gunas three,  
 Arising all from Prakṛiti. (40)

Of Brahmanas and of Kshatriyas,  
 And Vaisyas all, and Sudras too,  
 The duties are divided all  
 By Gunas,— of their actions born. (41)

Penance and peace, and self-control,  
 Forbearance, purity, rectitude,  
 Knowledge, experience, faith in God,—  
 Are Brahmanas' natural duties all. (42)

Valour, skill, glory, fortitude,  
 Not flying from the field of war,  
 And charity and sovereign power,—  
 Are Kshatriyas' natural duties all. (43)

Trade, agriculture, tending kine,  
 Are Vaisyas' natural duties all ;  
 And know that acts of service done  
 Are Sudras' natural duties all. (44)

Devoted to his actions all,  
 Perfection doth a man attain ;  
 And how in all his deeds engaged  
 He gains perfection, do thou hear. (45)

Worshipping Him, by actions done,—  
 From whom do creatures all arise,—  
 By whom pervaded is this all,—  
 Perfection doth a man attain. (46)

Better one's Dharma incomplete,  
 Than others' Dharma well-performed ;  
 By acting as our nature calls,  
 We do not any sin incur. (47)

Though full of faults, we shouldn't renounce  
 The actions which are ours by birth ;  
 By faults are undertakings all  
 Enveloped, as is fire by smoke. (48)

Whose Buddhi's unattached, and soul  
 Controlled, and whose desires are quelled,  
 Renouncing all,—perfection gains  
 Supreme, of freedom from all deeds. (49)

O son of Kuntī, learn in brief,  
 How, gaining such perfection, he  
 Attains to Brahma,—he who is  
 The end supreme of knowledge all. (50)

With Buddhi pure endued, and soul  
 Controlled by means of fortitude,  
 And Sound and objects of the sense  
 Renouncing, and so hate and love ; (51)

Who dwells apart, and little eats,  
 With body, speech, and mind controlled,—  
 In meditation e'er engaged,  
 Possessed of freedom from desire ; (52)

Devoid of egoism and power,  
 Desire and wrath, and pride and wealth,  
 And thought that "this is mine,"—at peace—  
 Is fit to be with Brahma one. (53)

Happy in soul, with Brahma one,  
 He neither grieveth nor desires ;—  
 The same to everyone, he gains  
 Supreme devotion unto me. (54)

He by devotion knoweth me—  
 In essence,—who and what am I ;  
 And knowing me in essence, he  
 Doth enter into me, indeed. (55)

Though e'er performing actions all,  
Yet taking refuge into me,  
He, through my favour, doth attain  
To that eternal, changeless state. (56)

Resigning all thy deeds to me,  
Within the mind, and having me  
As highest goal, with Buddhi-Yoga,  
For ever fix thy mind on me. (57)

Fixing thy mind on me, wilt thou  
O'ercome all troubles by my grace ;  
But if from egoism wilt thou  
Not listen, thou wilt perish soon. (58)

If, filled with egoism again,  
Thou thinkest that thou wilt not fight,  
All vain indeed is thy resolve,—  
And will thy nature urge thee on. (59)

Bound by thy deeds, O Kuntî's son,  
Born of thy nature, wilt thou do  
What thou in thy deluded mind  
Dost not desire to do at all. (60)

The Lord supreme, O Arjuna, dwells  
Within the hearts of creatures all ;  
And by his *Maya* moveth them,—  
Mounted as if on a machine. (61)

So do thou seek, O Bharata,  
Refuge in Him in every way ;  
And by His grace wilt thou attain  
Eternal state and peace supreme. (62)

Thus have I declared to thee  
Knowledge of knowledge most profound ;  
Now ponder it without reserve,  
And act as best thou dost desire. (63)

Hear thou again my word supreme,  
 Profoundest of all things that be ;  
 I'll tell thee what for thee is best,—  
 For dearly loved by me art thou. (64)

Think of me, be my devotee,  
 Worship me, sacrifice to me ;  
 So wilt thou come, I tell thee true,  
 To me, for thou art dear to me. (65)

Do thou, renouncing Dharmas all,  
 Take refuge into me alone ;  
 And I will free thee evermore  
 From all thy sins ;—so do not grieve. (66)

And never speak of this to him,  
 Worship or penance who has none,—  
 No act of service who performs,—  
 Nor one who malice bears to me. (67)

Who this supremest mystery  
 Doth tell unto my devotees,  
 With deep devotion unto me,—  
 Without a doubt will come to me. (68)

Among all men there is no one  
 Who doth what is more dear to me ;  
 Nor will there be another man  
 On earth more dear to me than he. (69)

And he who studies carefully  
 This sacred dialogue of ours,  
 He worships me with sacrifice  
 Of knowledge ;—such is my belief. (70)

And even he who heareth this,  
 Devoid of malice, full of faith,—  
 When free, will gain that happy state  
 Of those performing righteous deeds. (71)

Has this been heard, O Pritha's son,  
With an attentive mind by thee?  
Hast thou destroyed, O Arjuna,  
Delusion born of ignorance? (72)

## ARJUNA SAID

Destroyed is my delusion all;  
I've gained my memory through thy grace;  
And I am firm,—my doubts are gone;—  
And I will do thy bidding all. (73)

## SANJAYA SAID

Thus have I heard this dialogue  
Between the great-souled Pritha's son  
And Vasudeva,—most wonderful,—  
Causing my hair to stand on end. (74)

Through Vyasa's favour have I heard  
This Yoga supreme and mystery  
From Krishna,—he the mighty lord  
Of Yoga, proclaiming it himself. (75)

Remembering, remembering  
This holy, wondrous dialogue  
Of Kesava and of Arjuna, I  
Rejoice, O king, again, again. (76)

Remembering, remembering  
That Hari's form so wonderful,—  
Great is my amazement,—I  
Rejoice, O king, again, again. (77)

Wherever is Krishna, lord of Yoga,  
Wherever that archer Arjuna is,  
There's fortune, power, and victory,  
And lasting wisdom,—I believe. (78)

## CHAPTER XVIII

### BHISHMA'S BATTLE OF TEN DAYS

#### 214. THE FIRST DAY OF BATTLE:

##### YUDHISHTHIRA SEEKS PERMISSION TO FIGHT.

THE two armies were now ready for battle, when Yudhishthira, putting off his armour, proceeded to the Kuru camp and, prostrating himself before Bhishma, sought his blessings and permission to fight, which that hero readily gave. Then Yudhishthira asked for permission as well as blessings from Drona, Kripa, and Salya, and all of them granted the boon he sought.

#### 215. YUYUTSU JOINS THE PANDAVAS.

Then, in the midst of all, Yudhishthira loudly asked if any of the Kurus would join them as allies ; whereupon Yuyutsu, a son of Dhritarashtra, offered to fight on behalf of the Pandavas, and was gladly welcomed by them. Then, leaving the Kurus, Yuyutsu went over to the Pandavas, with cymbals and beat of drums (VI, xliii).

#### 216. THE BATTLE.

That fearful battle commenced, and the fight was so terrible that the son did not know his father, nor the father his son. Cars crashed, elephants shocked, and horsemen dashed against one another. Pikes, axes, maces, clubs, swords, lances, javelins, and darts pierced and hacked and flew, and great

was the slaughter on each side. The day ended with the death of Sveta, an ally of the *Pandavas*, who then retired to their tents for the night (VI, xlv-xlviii).

### 217. THE SECOND DAY OF BATTLE.

The second day commenced like the first, and the *Pandava* forces were, at the suggestion of Yudhishthira, arranged in the form of *Krauncharuna Vyuha* (array), at the head of which stood king Drupada,—with Bhīma, Dhrishtadyumna, Nakula, Sahadeva, the sons of Draupadi, and Abhimanyu constituting its two wings; while Yudhishthira himself formed its back. The Kauravas, on their side, formed a great (*Maha*) *Vyuha*, and the battle commenced. It was a great fight in which Bhishma and Arjuna, Dhrishtadyumna and Drona, Bhīma and the king of Kalinga were arrayed against each other; and the day ended with the death of the lord of Kalinga, an ally of the Kurus (VI, l-liv).

### 218. THE THIRD DAY OF BATTLE.

When the third day commenced, Bhishma formed a great *Vyuha*, called *Garuda*, at the back of which stood Bhishma himself, with Drona and Kṛitavarman for its eyes, with Asvatthaman and Kṛipa at its head, and Duryodhana and his followers at the rear. Against this Arjuna, with the assistance of Dhrishtadyumna, formed a *Vyuha* after the shape of the half Moon,—with Bhīma, assisted by Virata and Drupada, on its right, Dhrishtadyumna and Sikhandin in the middle, and Arjuna and Krishna on the left (VI, lv-lvi).

The fight was as fearful as on the two previous days, and Bhishma performed wonders indeed. He multiplied himself a thousandfold, and seemed to fight in all directions, and the vast army of Yudhishthira gave way before him. Then Arjuna, led by Krishna, laced the Grandsire (Bhishma), and all the Kuru heroes joined in the fight. But Arjuna did not put forth his best, while Bhishma exerted himself to the utmost. Unable to bear this, Krishna took up his discus, threw aside the reins, jumped down from his car, and rushed out to Bhishma to fight. Seeing him thus ready for battle, Bhishma greeted him and bowed to him, saying, "Strike me down, O Lord! Great will be my good in this world and the next if I am slain by you." In the meanwhile Arjuna came running after Krishna and tried to hold his arms and, seizing him by the feet, succeeded in stopping him, crying, "Quell your wrath, O Krishna. I swear that I will kill Kurus, nor withdraw from the acts to which I have pledged myself." At this Krishna was pacified; and, holding his discus, mounted the car again, and Arjuna on that day wrought great havoc among the Kuru ranks (VI, lvii-lix).

#### 219 THE FOURTH DAY OF BATTLE.

On the fourth day of battle the armies were arrayed in the same Vyuhās as on the previous day, and Bhishma and Arjuna engaged in a single combat, and distinguished themselves. Bhima displayed his powers against Duryodhana and his allies; and when the combatants retired in the evening, the Kauravas felt that they were being vanquished by the Pandavas. Thereupon Bhishma told



Duryodhana that the *Pandavas* were invulnerable, because the Supreme Creator himself, from whose navel sprang the lotus from which *Brahma* was born, -he who is both the actor and the act, the father and mother of the universe, -had become incarnate as *Krishna*, and bore an eternal affection for the *Pandavas*; and so he advised him to make peace. "For," said he, "righteousness (*Dharma*) is where *Krishna* is; and victory is where righteousness is." But Duryodhana refused to listen to his words (VI, lx-lxviii)

#### 220. THE FIFTH DAY OF BATTLE.

On the fifth day again the two armies faced each other for the fight, and the sons of *Pandu* arrayed their troops after the figure of a Hawk. At the back of it was *Bhīma*; *Sikhandin* and *Dhrishtadyumna* were its eyes; *Satyaki* was at its head, and *Arjuna* at its neck. *Drupada* was at its left wing; its right wing was formed by *Kaikeya*, who commanded an *Akshaulini*; the sons of *Draupadi* and *Abhimanyu* came at the rear; while at the tail was *Yudhishthira*, supported by *Nakula* and *Sahadeva*.

The *Kauravas* had formed a *Makara*-like array. The battle began fiercely, and *Bhishma* and *Arjuna* again faced each other and distinguished themselves while a number of single combats took place; and after a great deal of loss on either side, the armies retired for the night (VI, lxix-lxxiv).

#### 221. THE SIXTH DAY OF BATTLE.

When the night had worn away and the combatants had taken rest, they again marched forth

for battle ; and Dhrishtadyumna, at the suggestion of Yudhishthira, arranged the *Pandava* troops in the Makara array (*Vyuha*). King Drupada and Arjuna formed its head, Nakula and Sahadeva its eyes, Bhima its back, Abhimanyu and Yudhishthira its neck, and Virata its back. Dhrishtadyumna was stationed on its left wing, Dhrishtaketu and Chekitana on its right, while Sikhandin was stationed at the tail of the array.

Beholding the *Pandava* troops, Bhishma arranged his troops in a counter array, figuring a huge Crane. At its back was placed Drona; Asvatthaman and Kripa formed its two eyes; Kritavarman was placed at its head; Duryodhana at its neck; the king of Madra at its breast; while the sons of Somadatta stood in the rear of the array.

Then the two armies rushed to battle, and when it had raged till mid-day, Yudhishthira ordered his troops to be formed in an array known as *Suchimukha*; and with Bhima at their head, they penetrated into Kuru ranks. But they were repulsed, and when the battle ended for the day and the armies retired to their tents for the night, hundreds and thousands lay prostrate on the field (VI, lxxv-lxxx).

## 222. THE SEVENTH DAY OF BATTLE.

When the day had ended, Duryodhana, sick and bleeding, went to Bhishma and begged him to exert himself, or else all was lost; and that hero promised that either he would conquer the *Pandavas* or they should conquer him. The next morning he formed his troops in the *Mandala*

array, and against this Yudhishthira formed his own in the Vajra array. The armies then closed in a fight, and many single combats took place between the heroes on either side; and after a terrible struggle they retired to their tents at the approach of night (VI, lxxxii-lxxxvii).

### 223. THE EIGHTH DAY OF BATTLE.

When the day dawned on the eighth morning, the Kurus formed a mighty array, resembling the dreadful Ocean itself; and Bhishma marched in the van of his troops, supported by Drona, Asvatthaman, Duryodhana and Kripa. Against this Yudhishthira ordered Dhrishtadyumna to form his troops in the *Sringataka* array; and at its head was placed Bhima; at the navel Arjuna; in the middle Yudhishthira, Nakula and Sahadeva; while Abhimanyu, Virata, the sons of Draupadi and Ghatotkacha brought up the rear.

The battle raged all day long, until the hideous pall of night fell over the earth; and, broken and exhausted, the two armies retired to their respective tents for rest (VI, lxxxviii-xcvi).

### 224. THE NINTH DAY OF BATTLE.

When the ninth day dawned, Arjuna asked Dhrishtadyumna to place Sikhandin face to face before Bhishma promising to protect him (Sikhandin) himself. Bhishma, on his side, formed his troops in the Sarvatobhadra array and, assisted by all the heroes,—Kripa, Kritavarman, Sakuni, Jayadratha, Drona, Asvatthaman, and the rest,—led the battle against the mighty forces of the Pandavas.

The fight that ensued was fearful to behold, and Bhishma inflicted great slaughter on the *Pandava* armies which, shaken and repulsed, retired to their tents for the night (VI, xcix-cvii).

#### 225. THE TENTH DAY OF BATTLE.

When the armies had retired for the night, Yudhishthira, faint and disheartened, approached Krishna, and sought his advice. Krishna offered to fight Bhishma and slay him; but, as Arjuna had taken a vow to do this himself, he (Krishna) thought it was easy enough for him to accomplish the task. Then Yudhishthira remembered that Bhishma had promised to give him good advice in time of need; and so he begged Krishna to accompany him to seek Bhishma's counsel how best to secure victory for the *Pandava* side. Krishna agreed, and they both went to the Grand-sire of the Kurus (Bhishma) to ask him about the means of his own death (VI, cviii).

#### 226. BHISHMA'S ADVICE.

When they entered his tent, Bhishma welcomed them both; and Yudhishthira asked him how they could vanquish him in battle and secure sovereignty for themselves. "O son of Kunti," said Bhishma, "so long as I am alive you will not be able to obtain victory. Therefore smite me down without delay, and I permit you to strike me as you please. When I am slain, all else will be slain; know that for certain."

"Tell me," said Yudhishthira, "the means by which we may be able to vanquish you, for otherwise you are incapable of being defeated by any one."

"O son of *Pandû*," replied Bhishma, "I am indeed incapable of being defeated in a fight. But I do not fight with one who is a woman. That mighty car-warrior, *Sikhandin*, was once a female. Let the heroic Arjuna, clad in mail, placing *Sikhandin* in front of him, pierce me with arrows; and, beholding a person in front of me who was a woman once, I shall not fight. Then let *Dhananjaya* (Arjuna) quickly pierce me through. Except the numerous *Krishna* or *Dhananjaya*, I do not find any one in the three worlds who can slay me in battle."

Hearing this, *Yudhishthira* and *Krishna* returned to their tents; and when Arjuna heard what was to happen the next day, he was filled with grief and shame at the idea of having to slay the high-souled Bhishma. But *Krishna* reminded him of his promise to slay the Grandsire, and he remembered too that *Sikhandin* had been created in order to compass the death of Bhishma; and so he agreed (VI, cviii).

#### 227. SIKHANDIN'S PART.

When the sun rose on the tenth morning, the two armies arrayed themselves for the fight. *Sikhandin* was in the van of the *Pandava* troops, and he was supported by all the five *Pandava* brothers and their allies. In the van of his own forces was Bhishma, and he was supported by all the principal Kuru heroes and warriors (VI, cix).

#### 228. THE DEATH OF BHISHMA.

Then ensued a most fearful fight, the most terrible of all, and many hundreds and thousands

of warriors were slain on either side ; but Bhishma was irresistible everywhere. Thereupon Arjuna, beholding Bhishma's prowess, asked Sikhandin to confront the Grandsire ; and Bhishma, seeing before him one who was a woman once, ceased to fight. Sikhandin pierced him with many arrows, but they did not cause him the slightest pain. Then Arjuna, standing behind Sikhandin, discharged many arrows at him, which pierced his very vitals like the thunderbolt. Unable to fight with Arjuna, screened behind Sikhandin, Bhishma received his arrows without complaint; and, mangled with darts, fell down from his car, with his head laid towards the east, a little before the sun had set. Great were the lamentations at his fall, and the Kurus became deeply dejected and depressed at heart (VI, cix-cxx).

#### 229. THE BED OF ARROWS.

When Bhishma fell, the sun was in the southern solstice; but the Grandsire desired to pass when it came to the northern solstice. And, as he could die only at his own pleasure, he, the best of all Veda-knowing sages, decided to live on till the sun should change the direction of his course. But, as his head was hanging down, he asked for a pillow ; and Dhananjaya (Arjuna) supported it by means of sharp arrows, as suited his bed, and the hero was gratified. "On this bed," said he, "I shall lie till the sun rolls back to the northern solstice." Then, offering his homage to the Sun, he rested there (VI, cxxi-cxxii).

#### 230. ARJUNA BRINGS OUT WATER FROM THE EARTH.

After the night had passed away, Bhishma

was racked with pain, and asked Arjuna to give him some water to drink. Then Arjuna placed his arrow on his bow, *Gandiva*, and pierced the earth with the dart, whereupon there gushed out a jet of water, pure and auspicious, and Bhishma was pleased with the cool, nectar-like and celestial draught (VI, cxxiii).

### 231. BHISHMA'S ADVICE TO DURYODHANA.

Then Bhishma called Duryodhana and, casting his eyes of compassion on him, said, "Renounce your wrath, O king. Conclude peace with the *Pandavas*. Give them half of your kingdom, and let Yudhishthira repair to *Indraprastha*. Let there be peace with my death. But, if you do not listen to my words, you will rue your folly hereafter." But Duryodhana would not listen (VI, cxxii).

### 232. KARNA SEEKS PERMISSION TO FIGHT.

When the armies had retired for the night, Karna came to Bhishma, and sought his permission to fight for the Kurus. Bhishma gave him permission to do so. "Fight", said he; "I accord you permission. Free from malice and wrath, casting off arrogance, engage in the fight." Then the son of *Radha* (Karna) saluted and propitiated the Grandsire, mounted his chariot, and went to the pavilion of Duryodhana to offer his service to the king (VI, cxxiv).

## VII. DRONA PARVA

### CHAPTER XIX

#### DRONA'S BATTLE OF FIVE DAYS

##### 233. DRONA AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

ON the fall of Bhishma the Kuru army resembled the heavenly dome, stripped of the stars. Then they remembered Karna, the foremost of all wielders of weapons, and that hero soon came to them to help. With his advice, Duryodhana requested Drona to become his commander-in-chief in place of Bhishma ; and he consented on condition that he would not slay Dhrishtadyumna, who had been created to slay him (Drona). Thus Drona was invested with the chief command to the delight of all (VII, i-vii).

##### 234. THE ELEVENTH DAY OF BATTLE.

The eleventh day of battle commenced, and the Kuru forces were arrayed in the form of a *Sakata* (Car), while the army of the *Pandavas* was formed in the shape of a *Kraunch* (Crane). Karna was at the head of the Kuru army, while Krishna and Arjuna headed the *Pandava* hosts (VII, vii).

##### 235. THE ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE YUDHISHTHIRA.

The battle which ensued was terrible, and the whole field was covered with fallen warriors ; while broken chariots and carcasses of elephants and horses



appeared like the firmament overhung with dense masses of dark clouds. Then Duryodhana and Karna begged Drona to grant them a boon to capture Yudhishthira alive. "For," said Duryodhana, "if he could be taken alive, he could once more be defeated at the game of dice, and the Pandavas, obedient to him, must repair to the forest once more, and the Kurus be free from the unconquerable might of Arjuna." Drona, after some reflection, promised to capture Yudhishthira if he could find him unprotected by the heroic Arjuna.

Drona created great confusion among the Pandava ranks, and attempted to capture Yudhishthira, but in vain; for Arjuna was ever ready to come to the rescue of the king. And, when the evening approached and the sun set, the armies retired for the night, and the victory for the day lay with the Pandava hosts (VII, vii-xvi).

### 236. THE TWELFTH DAY OF BATTLE.

When the next day dawned, the Kurus resolved to draw Arjuna out of the field, so that Yudhishthira, left alone, might easily be captured. Knowing that, if challenged, he could never turn back, the Samsaptakas called Arjuna out to meet them; and he, leaving behind Satyajit and Dhrishadyumna to protect Yudhishthira, went out to fight them. Then Drona, knowing that Arjuna was away, charged the Pandava king (VII, xvii-xix).

### 237. THE BATTLE ARRAYS.

The Kuru forces were arrayed in the form of Suparna, and Drona himself was at their head.

He was supported by Duryodhana and others ; while *Karna*, supported by his relatives and friends, brought up the rear. Seeing this, *Yudhishthira* ordered his troops to be arrayed in a semi-circle, and asked *Dhrishtadyumna* to be near him in the fight (VII, xx).

### 238. THE FIGHT.

*Drona* rushed at *Yudhishthira*, but was repelled by the *Panchala* prince. Then *Duryodhana* charged *Bhima* and forced him to hide himself underneath the body of an elephant (VII, xx-xxvi).

### 239. ARJUNA AND SAMSAPTAKAS : KRISHNA'S PART.

In the meanwhile *Arjuna*, knowing that *Yudhishthira* was being pressed by *Drona*, still decided on the destruction of the *Samsaptakas*. He charged *Bhagadatta* who, invoking the *Vaishnava* weapon, and inspiring it with sacred aphorisms, aimed it at the heart of *Arjuna* ; but *Krishna* received it on his own heart, when the weapon was changed into a celestial garland. Then *Arjuna* said to *Krishna*, "O lotus-eyed, you had promised only to drive my steeds, and not to fight for me in battle. It is only when I am involved in a calamity, or am incapable of resisting my foes, that you should take upon yourself to protect me ; not otherwise." Then replied *Krishna*, "O sinless one, I have four forms, and I divide myself for the benefit of the world ; one of these is ever engaged in the performance of actions. This *Vaishnava* weapon is irresistible, and it was for your benefit that I baffled it. You can slay *Bhagadatta* now." Then the son of *Pandu* (*Arjuna*) pierced

the heart of Bhagadatta with a crescent shaped arrow of straight knots, and he fell down dead. Thereupon Sakuni and Karna set upon Arjuna, but were compelled to retire; and when the sun set, and the armies retired to their respective tents, the whole field was covered with the wounded and the slain; but the vow of Drona that he would capture Yudhishthira, still remained unfulfilled (VII, xxvii-xxxii).

#### 240. THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF BATTLE.

When the thirteenth day dawned, Drona, finding how difficult it was to capture Yudhishthira, vowed that, if Arjuna was drawn away again, he would slay a mighty hero, the foremost among the car-warriors of the *Pandava* hosts, that day. (VII, xxxiii).

#### 241. THE CIRCULAR ARRAY.

He arranged his troops in a Circular array, and placed himself in the van, Duryodhana in the centre, and all the mighty princes around (VII, xxxiii).

#### 242. THE TASK OF ABHIMANYU.

Arjuna was again challenged by the *Samsaptakas*. The *Pandavas* were headed by Bhima, but could not resist the attack of Drona. Then Yudhishthira, finding that no one else could check the son of Bharadvaja (Drona), charged Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna and Subhadra and the nephew of Krishna, who was in no way inferior to his father or uncle, to penetrate the Circular array of the Kurus. "I will," said the prince, "penetrate without delay into the middle

of Drona's fierce array. My father has taught me the way to pierce through such an array, but I know not the way to come out of it again." Then Yudhishthira asked Abhimanyu to penetrate the array, and promised that all of them would follow and protect him from all sides. Thereupon the son of Subhadra (Abhimanyu) resolved to do the bidding of the king (VII, xxxiv-xxxv).

#### 243. ABHIMANYU'S FIGHT.

Then the heroic son of Arjuna, bearing an excellent standard, with the device of a Karanikara tree, and clad in a fine coat of mail, rushed out against Drona, and confounded his ranks. He was no less than Krishna or Arjuna in power, and bore down all before him. He compelled Duryodhana to retreat, forced back Duhsasana, and confounded Karna. Then he penetrated into the Kuru array; but as the Pandavas and their allies rushed into the breach to follow him, they were checked by Jayadratha, the king of Sindhu,—the hero who had been given a boon by Mahadeva that he would be able to check the Pandavas,—all except Arjuna (VII, xxxvi-xliii).

#### 244. THE DEATH OF ABHIMANYU.

Abhimanyu fought with great power and skill of hand and, drawing his bow to a complete circle, afflicted the Kuru hosts. Then six mighty car-warriors, Karna, Kritavarman, Kripa, Asvatthaman, and the king of Kosala,—with Drona, at their head,—surrounded the prince; and, though he fought with discus and mace like a second Janardana (Krishna) on the field, he was overpowered

and slain by their combined arms,—the hero who wore the splendour of the full Moon, who was like the starry firmament decked with the full Moon, and who, without turning back from the field, stood in battle against odds (VII, xliv-xlix).

Beholding Abhimanyu lying dead on the ground, the Kurus were filled with joy, and the *Pandavas* were deeply distressed ; but Yudhishthira comforted them, for that hero, he said, had surely attained to the abode of the righteous (VII, xlix).

The sun set on the hosts of wounded and the slain, and the earth presented a terrible sight ; and at the advent of night the troops retired to rest, leaving behind a ghastly field of carnage and death (VII, l).

#### 245. VYASA CONSOLES YUDHISHTHIRA.

Yudhishthira's grief at the death of Abhimanyu was the greatest of all, but he was comforted by Vyasa, who explained to him the origin of the dark and red and tawny Goddess of Death, who dwells in the southern quarter, and destroys without committing sin (VII, li-liii).

#### 246. THE VOW OF ARJUNA.

When the sun had set and the armies retired to their tents, Arjuna and Krishna also returned to their camp, and Yudhishthira told them the story of Abhimanyu's death. Hearing this, Arjuna fell down on the earth in great distress ; but he soon regained his consciousness and, rising from the ground, drew a deep breath. Then, with eyes flooded with tears, he cried out, " Tomorrow I

will slay Jayadratha, who was instrumental in bringing about the slaughter of my son. If to-morrow's sun sets before I succeed in slaying that sinful wretch, then will I enter into a blazing fire myself and perish." (VII, lxxii-lxxiii).

#### 247. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ARJUNA AND JAYADRATHA.

When the Kurus heard of this terrible vow of Arjuna, they resolved to protect Jayadratha with all their might. And then the lord of Sindhu (Jayadratha) asked Drona to tell him the difference between Arjuna and himself. "As regards teaching," said Drona, "both of you have received an equal share. But through Yoga and the effects of hardship that he has undergone, Arjuna has become superior to you. But fight, and do not fear." (VII, lxxiv).

In order to protect Jayadratha, Drona resolved on the next day to form an array, half of which was like the figure of a Car and half a Lotus. Within that array was a smaller one, of the shape of a Wedge; and Jayadratha was placed in the middle of the Lotus-like array, by the side of the other half (VII, lxxv).

In the meanwhile Krishna consoled his sister Subhadra, and Uttara, the young wife of Abhimanyu, who were sore afflicted with grief; and Draupadi too came to comfort them (VII, lxxvii-lxxviii).

#### 248. KRISHNA'S PART.

Then Krishna, desirous of helping Arjuna in the task of slaying Jayadratha, had recourse

to Yoga meditation, and resolved to put forth his power for Arjuna's sake, and so to act that that hero should slay Jayadratha before nightfall in the presence of all (VII, lxxviii-lxxix).

#### 249. THE WORSHIP OF MAHADEVA.

He appeared to Arjuna in a dream and bade him seek the assistance of Mahadeva; and then they both worshipped that Deity who has the Bull for his emblem (VII, lxxx).

#### 250. THE WEAPONS OF MAHADEVA.

Mahadeva, being pleased, bade them go to a heavenly lake of nectar, of the effulgence of the solar disc, and take out from it his own weapons,—a bow and arrow, which lay there in the form of snakes. Then, assuming the form of a Brahmacharin, he taught Arjuna, gifted with an accurate memory, the *mantras* (charms) and the art of discharging the weapons, and gave him his terrible Pasupata weapon too (VII, lxxxi).

#### 251. THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF BATTLE : DRONA'S ARRAYS.

When the night had passed away and the day dawned, Drona formed his troops in a battle array, partly in the shape of a *Sakata* (Car-wedge) and partly a Circle. In the rear of his army was formed another array, of the figure of a Lotus, within which was constructed a third of the form of a Needle. In the rear of this Needle was placed Kṛitavarman; behind him, in the *Sakata*, came Duryodhana and Karna; and behind them was stationed Jayadratha, by the side of the Needle array;

while Drona himself, armed in a white coat of mail, stood at the mouth of the Sakata, with his banner bearing the device of a Sacrificial Altar and a black Deer (VII, lxxxvii).

### 252. ARJUNA'S FIGHT.

The *Pandavas* in their turn arrayed their forces with *Krishna* and *Arjuna* at their head ; and the battle which ensued was fierce and terrible. Leaving behind *Satyaki* to protect *Yudhishthira*, *Arjuna* defeated *Duhsasana*, and entered the thick of the *Kuru* forces ; and, passing through *Drona's* division, engaged a number of heroes,—*Kritavarman* and others. Thereupon *Duryodhana* in great sorrow approached the Preceptor (*Drona*), and begged him to come to the assistance of the *Kurus* ; and *Drona* gave *Duryodhana* an invincible armour belonging to *Mahadeva* and, joining its parts by means of *Brahma* threads, bade him go forth and fight the enemy without fear (VII, lxxxviii-xciv).

### 253. THE HORSES OF ARJUNA.

*Arjuna*, anxious to meet *Jayadratha* face to face, pressed forward through the *Kuru* hosts. But he was surrounded by the enemy on all sides, and his horses were afflicted with arrow wounds. And so he asked *Krishna* to unyoke them and leave them at ease, and draw out their darts, while he himself kept the whole army of the *Kurus* in check. But, as there was no water for the horses to drink,—and they wanted water for drinking and not a bath,—*Arjuna* struck the earth with a weapon and created a beautiful lake,



at which the steeds could quench their thirst. He constructed an arrowy hall for their rest, seeing which the Kurus were filled with fear, while others applauded the hero's power. Krishna then unharnessed the horses, and made them drink of the water of the lake. He then yoked them once more to the chariot with a joyful heart ; and, urging them to their utmost speed, came where the struggle was the thickest (VII,xcv-c).

#### 254. THE GENERAL FIGHT.

While Arjuna was anxious to meet Jayadratha face to face, Drona was equally anxious to prevent him. Then Duryodhana attacked Arjuna but was defeated, and Drona attacked Yudhishthira and compelled him to retreat. Then he set upon Satyaki, and vanquished hundreds and thousands of Panchalas, Matsyas, and others (VII, ci-cx).

Then Yudhishthira, believing that Arjuna was in danger, bade Satyaki go to his assistance ; and he who had been charged by Arjuna to protect the king, asked Bhima to take his place, and, with Yudhishthira's blessings, went to the assistance of Arjuna. He penetrated the Kuru hosts, eluded Drona, defeated Kṛitavarman, put Jalasandha to death, and, displaying great feats of arms, slew Sudarsana and a host of Yavanas, Kambojas and mountaineers led by Duryodhana himself, and advanced to the help of Arjuna. In the meanwhile Drona engaged Dhrishtadyumna in a wonderful fight, filling the Pandavas and Panchalas with panic. The battle raged furiously and Yudhishthira, again feeling anxious for the safety of Arjuna, bade Bhima go to his help ; and that hero, charg-

ing Dhṛishadyumna to protect the king, proceeded to the spot where Dhananjaya was (VII,cx-cxxvii).

Bhima penetrated through the Kuru hosts, and Drona, unable to check him, let him pass; and, defeating Karna after a fearful struggle, he came to the assistance of Arjuna (VII, cxxviii-cxxxix).

#### 255. THE DEATH OF BHURISRAVAS.

Satyaki had by this time joined Arjuna, but he was fatigued, and his stock of weapons was exhausted, when that foremost of Kurus, Bhurisravas, assailed him. He was on the point of putting him (Satyaki) to death, when Arjuna cut off his right arm,—of him who was devoted to the performance of sacrifice. Bhurisravas complained that it was a heartless task, inasmuch as he was engaged in fighting with Satyaki alone; but Arjuna assured him that it was impossible for him to commit a sinful act. Then Bhurisravas, who had the device of a Sacrificial Stake on his banner, touched the ground with his head and, offering to him with his left arm the right one that had been severed, desired to enter upon the performance of Praya (fasting to death). Then Krishna wished that he who was devoted to the performance of sacrifice, should repair to his holy regions; whereupon Satyaki rose and cut off his head even as he was engaged in Yoga for the liberation of his Soul. And the head of Bhurisravas looked like the head of a horse cut off in a Horse-sacrifice and placed on the sacrificial altar (VII, cxli-cxliii).

#### 256. THE DEATH OF JAYADRATHA.

Then, as the sun was going quickly towards

the western hills and very little of the day remained, the critical time of battle drew near, and all the chief heroes of the Kurus gathered round Jayadratha to protect him. Arjuna tried in vain to penetrate through them; and Krishna, knowing how difficult it was for Arjuna to slay Jayadratha, had recourse to his Yoga power, and created a veil of darkness to cover the sun. Then Jayadratha, believing that the sun had really set, came out of his protecting ring; and Arjuna, charged by Krishna, cut off the head of the king of Sindhu. As he did so, Krishna withdrew the veil of darkness from the sun,—the darkness that was only an illusion caused by him; and, as they saw this, tears of sorrow gushed out from the eyes of the Kurus, for Arjuna had slaughtered eight of their Akshauhiniis and succeeded in slaying Jayadratha too (VII, cxlv-cl).

The Pandavas were filled with joy and Duryodhana with despair at the death of Jayadratha, and he complained of Drona's partiality for his pupil (Arjuna). "I have told you," said Drona, "that Arjuna is unrecognizable in battle. We had sufficient proofs of what he really is when, protected by him, Sikhandin slew Bhishma in battle. He cannot, indeed, be defeated or slain." (VII, cl-cli.)

### 257. THE NIGHT ATTACK.

After the death of Jayadratha the hostilities were not suspended even though the sun had set, and a fierce nocturnal battle raged between the combatants. The Rakshasa son of Bhima,

Ghatotkacha, rushed against the son of Drona and displayed his great illusive power. Drona fought with Yudhishthira and made him retreat; Karna engaged Arjuna, and Dhṛishṭadyumna and Asvatthaman opposed each other (VII, cliii-clvi),

#### 258. THE LAMP-LIGHT ATTACK.

For a long time the battle raged in darkness; and then, at the command of Duryodhana, they laid aside their weapons and took in hand burning lamps filled with perfumed oil, and the whole army was lighted up again. And then the battle commenced anew. Kritavarman engaged Yudhishthira and forced him to retreat; Duryodhana fought with Bhīma, but was repulsed; Sahadeva opposed Karna, but was made to fly; and a number of combats took place between heroes on either side (VII, clxiii-clxxiv).

#### 259. THE DEATH OF GHATOTKACHA.

Then Ghatotkacha charged against Karna, and a terrible battle ensued between them; and at one time it seemed as if the Rākshasa would slay Karna with his illusive power. It was midnight now, and Karna, loosening the dart given to him by Indra, hurled it at his foe; and, destroying the blazing illusion of the Rākshasa, it pierced through his breast, and, penetrating his heart, struck him dead. Thus fell Ghatotkacha after slaying a full Akshauhini of troops (VII, clxxv-clxxx).

Beholding the death of Bhīma's son, the Pandavas were filled with grief; but Krishna rejoiced, for Karna had exhausted the invincible

dart given to him by Indra, which he had intended to hurl against Arjuna (VII, clxxxi).

#### 260. THE MOON-LIGHT FIGHT.

It was now past midnight and the troops, enveloped in darkness and dust, were oppressed with drowsiness and fatigue. Then Arjuna bade that they should all desist from fighting and take rest for a time. Then, exhausted with exertion, the combatants lay down on the field to sleep. And the Moon rose, and the world was flooded with a stream of light, and darkness fled away. The sleeping hosts were awakened by the light of the Moon, and once again the battle was renewed (VII, clxxxv).

#### 261. THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF BATTLE:

##### TWO DIVISIONS OF THE KURU FORCES.

When three-fourths of the night had passed away, the battle began; and soon the eastern sky was crimsoned with the myriad rays of the sun appearing like a circle of gold. The Kauravas divided their hosts into two parts, and Drona, placing Duryodhana before him, advanced against the Pandavas. Beholding the two divisions of the Kuru army, Krishna asked Arjuna to see that one division was to his left, and the other, headed by Drona, to his right; and Arjuna, obedient to the counsel of Krishna, wheeled round so as to keep Drona and Karna to his right (VII, clxxxvi).

#### 262. ASVATTHAMAN THE ELEPHANT.

And now a terrible battle began. Bhîma,

worked up with rage, penetrated into Drona's division; Duryodhana and his brothers encountered Nakula and Sahadeva; Drona and Arjuna charged against each other; and Drishadyumna repulsed Duhshasana. But Drona, drawn by horses of golden colour, was irresistible everywhere. Realising that he was incapable of being vanquished in battle, except when he laid aside his weapons himself,—and that he could only do when Asvatthaman was slain,—Krishna advised Arjuna to abandon virtue, and betake himself to a contrivance for securing victory; and he suggested that some one should inform the Preceptor (Drona) that Asvatthaman had been slain. Dhananjaya (Arjuna) did not accept this advice of Krishna, but Yudhishthira did so with much reluctance. Then Bhima killed an elephant called Asvatthaman, and exclaimed aloud that Asvatthaman was slain, knowing that what he then spoke was false. But Drona, believing that the report was false, still continued to fight. And then the great Rishis, headed by the God of Fire, desirous of taking Drona to the regions of Brahma, appeared before him and said, "You are fighting wrongly. The hour of your death is at hand; so cast away your weapons. You are learned in the Vedas, and it behoves you not to perform cruel acts like these." (VII, clxxxviii-cxci.)

### 263. DRONA QUESTIONS YUDHISHTHIRA.

Hearing these words and seeing Drishadyumna before him, Drona was dejected at heart; but, wishing to know if his son was really slain, and feeling certain that Yudhishthira would never

tell a lie, even for the sake of getting the wealth of the three worlds, he asked him if the report was really true (VII, cxc).

#### 264. KRISHNA'S ADVICE TO YUDHISHTHIRA.

But Govinda (*Krishna*), knowing that Drona could sweep away the *Pandavas* from the face of the earth, said to Yudhishthira, "If influenced by rage, Drona fights only for half a day more, your troops are sure to be destroyed. Save us from Drona. Under the circumstances like the present, falsehood is better than truth." (VII, cxc.)

#### 265. YUDHISHTHIRA'S LIE.

Thereupon Yudhishthira decided to speak as he was told. But, afraid of telling a lie, yet anxious to obtain victory, he said clearly that *Asvatthamar* was dead, adding indistinctly the word *elephant* after the name (VII, cxc).

#### 266. THE CHARIOT OF YUDHISHTHIRA.

Before this the chariot of Yudhishthira had stood at a height of four fingers' breadth from the surface of the earth; but, after he had uttered this lie, his steeds touched the ground (VII, cxc)

#### 267. DHRISHTADYUMNA SLAYS DRONA.

Hearing these words from the lips of Yudhishthira and haunted by what the *Rishis* had said Drona was unable to fight as before. And the *Dhrishtadyumna*, who was created out of great sacrifice for the purpose of slaying Drona, assailed him. But Drona, having laid aside his weapons, was seated peacefully in his car, and he

betaken himself to Yoga. He had set his heart on Vishnu and, reposing on the quality of Sattva, was lost in meditation on Om, the eternal Brahma. Dhrishtadyumna dragged him by the head,—while all around cried shame, and Drona remained silent all the time—and with his sword cut it off. Thus he slew the Preceptor, even though Arjuna and the *Pandava* hosts cried that he should not be slain but captured alive. Drona then ascended to heaven, and entered the stellar path; and at his death both the contending armies, the Kauravas and *Pandavas*, all became depressed (VII, cxc-cxciv).

#### 268. THE VOW OF ASVATTHAMAN.

When Drona's son heard an account of his father's death, he was filled with rage, and vowed that he would slay Dhrishtadyumna and the *Panchalas* to the last man (VII, cxcvi).

#### 269. THE NARAYANA WEAPON.

He invoked the *Narayana* weapon, granted by *Narayana* himself to his father; and at its sight the whole world began to tremble, and the *Pandava* hosts to fly. Then *Krishna* stayed their flight and bade them quickly lay aside their arms, and alight from their elephants, horses, and chariots, and stand on the ground, when the *Narayana* weapon would pass by without hurting them. They all acted according to his bidding and so were saved; and as this weapon, which could kill an *Akshauhini* of troops, could not be used twice, *Krishna* succeeded in counteracting its force. Then the two armies, after a fierce struggle, withdrew to their tents for the night (VII, cxcvi-ccii).



## 270. THE VISION OF ARJUNA.

When Drona had been slain by Dhṛiṣṭadyumna, Arjuna beheld a most wonderful sight, and saw a male Being of great effulgence standing before him. "People," said Arjuna, "think that I rout my foes, but they are really routed by him (Being)." Thereupon Vyasa, who came there, explained to him that he had seen Mahadeva, half Agni and half Moon, the creator of the universe, the lord of all action, who is the embodiment of all holy waters, and has the sacrificial ladle in his hands, and whose eternal phallic form is ever present in the observance of the Brahmachari vow (VII,cciii).

## VIII. KARNA PARVA

### CHAPTER XX.

#### KARNA'S BATTLE OF TWO DAYS

##### 271. KARNA AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

AFTER Drona had been slain, Duryodhana and others went with a heavy heart to his son; and, by his advice, Karna was installed as commander-in-chief of the Kuru hosts. Then the son of Suta (Karna), shining like the rising sun, arranged his army in the form of a Makara, while Arjuna arranged his own in that of the half Moon to oppose it (VIII, x-xi).

##### 272. THE SIXTEENTH DAY OF BATTLE.

And then a terrible battle commenced. Bhīma opposed Asvatthaman, and Arjuna fought with Samsaptakas; Sahadeva and Duhshasana charged against each other; Kripa faced Dhṛishtadyumna, and Kṛitavarman compelled Sikhandin to retreat. Then Yudhishthira fought with Duryodhana, and Karna engaged Nakula and slew the Panchalas. And then, as the sun set, the combatants retired from the field, afraid of the horrors of an attack at night. The day had ended well for the Pandavas, and the Kaurava divisions had all been scattered, and great was their carnage in the fight (VIII, xii-xix).

##### 273. THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF BATTLE:

##### SALYA AS CHARIOTEER OF KARNA.

As the Kuru hosts had been defeated that day,

Karna vowed that he would either slay Arjuna the next day, or be slain himself on the field. He then asked Duryodhana to induce Salya to be his charioteer, and the king of Madra agreed on condition that he would be free to utter anything he liked in the presence of Karna (VIII, xxxi-xxxv).

#### 274. FIGHT BETWEEN ARJUNA AND KARNA.

Then Salya got upon the great car of Karna, and that hero asked him to lead him where Arjuna was. While leading him to the scene of battle, however, Salya continued to decry the prowess of Karna and roused him to rage, and reminded him that the *Pandavas*, having Krishna for a friend, were invincible (VIII, xxxvi-xliv).

#### 275. KARNA CHARGES THE PANDAVAS.

And then a great battle began. The Kuru hosts were led by Karna, and the *Pandava* armies by Yudhishthira. The son of Radha (Karna) rushed furiously against the *Panchalas*, but they repelled his attack; and then he charged Yudhishthira, and compelled him to fly wounded from the field. Then he encountered Bhima, but was wounded himself and carried away insensible from the field. But he soon regained consciousness and charged Bhima again, checked him, cut off his standard and deprived him of his car; and then that hero jumped down and continued to fight on foot with his mace (VIII, xlv-li).

#### 276. KRISHNA'S ADVICE TO ARJUNA.

The sun was now at its meridian, and still th

battle continued unabated. Arjuna encountered Samsaptakas ; Kripa fought with Sikhandin, and Dhrishtadyumna with Kritavarman ; and Nakula opposed Duryodhana ; but Karna carried all before him, and the chances of the day seemed to favour the Kauravas. Then Arjuna in great sorrow appealed to Krishna, who advised him to see Yudhishthira who had retired from the field (VIII, lii-lviii).

#### 277. QUARREL BETWEEN YUDHISHTHIRA AND ARJUNA.

Thereupon Arjuna and Krishna went to see Yudhishthira who, hearing that Karna was still alive, was filled with rage, and reproached Arjuna for want of spirit, bidding him make over his bow *Gandiva* to some one else if he was unable to resist the son of Radha (Karna). Arjuna was filled with rage to hear this and, taking out his sword, threatened to kill Yudhishthira ; but Krishna pacified him, whereupon he recollected himself and sought forgiveness of his brother. He then took a vow to slay Karna before the end of the day (VIII, lx-lxxi).

#### 278. BHIMA SLAYS DUHSASANA AND DRINKS HIS BLOOD.

The battle then continued with unabated rage. Arjuna fought with the Kuru hosts ; Bhima engaged Duryodhana and Sakuni ; and Karna killed the Panchala hosts and checked Nakula in the fight. Then Bhima fought with Duhsasana and slew him ; and, tearing open his heart, drank his blood, even as he had vowed when Draupadi was insulted

in the Assembly Hall of the Kurus (VIII, lxxii-lxxxiii).

279. FIGHT BETWEEN ARJUNA AND KARNA : THE  
DEATH OF KARNA.

And now a fierce struggle ensued between, Arjuna and Radha's son (Karna). The two warriors, with white steeds to their cars, faced each other, — Arjuna with his Ape-banner flying, and Karna with his banner marked with an elephant's sign. The battle was terrible to behold; the heroes were equally matched, and the celestials and all creatures of the earth watched the event anxiously. Both appeared to be invincible, and discharged their arrows with skill and strength, and Yudhishthira came to the spot to witness the fight. Then Krishna, finding that Arjuna was weakening, gave him his own Sudarsana weapon to fight, whereupon Karna's strength began to abate. Then, as if the hour of Karna's death had arrived, the Earth began to devour the left wheel of his car. It went deep down into the ground and was clogged, and the car began to reel. His horses and chariot were dislodged; still Karna showed his activity to the best of his power. He brought out his Brahma weapon, and Arjuna too set his own Brahma weapon to his bow. Then Krishna bade Arjuna go near to Karna, while the Earth had swallowed up one of the wheels of his car. Thereupon Karna got down from his chariot and, catching the sunken wheel with his hands, tried to extricate it, and asked Arjuna to desist from fighting till he had taken it out. But Krishna bade Arjuna strike him with his celestial

weapon while the wheel of his enemy's car was still stuck in the Earth; and Arjuna, taking out from his quiver an Anjalika arrow,—effulgent like Indra's thunderbolt or the thousand-rayed Sun,—shot it at Karna, and struck off his enemy's head. Then a light came out of Karna's body, passed through the sky, and entered into the Sun VIII, lxxxiv-xci).

Seeing Karna slain by Arjuna, the *Pandavas* were elated with joy, but the *Kauravas* were struck with fear and fled, and the king of Madra (*Salya*) left the battle-field. The whole ground was darkened with the bodies of wounded and the slain, and the havoc was dreadful to behold. Hearing the news of this defeat, *Dhritarashtra* fell down senseless on the ground, and so did his queen, *Gandhari*, and they were consoled with difficulty by their attendants (VIII, xcii-xcvi).

## IX. SALYA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXI

#### THE DEFEAT OF KAURAVAS

##### 280. THE GRIEF OF DURYODHANA.

AFTER the death of Karna Duryodhana was immersed in a sea of grief. Asvatthaman advised him to make peace before it was too late, but Duryodhana did not think that it was yet time for peace. "A righteous fight," he observed, "is a good policy. This is not the time for acting like a eunuch, but a time for war. I have performed many sacrifices ; I have listened to the Vedas ; and I am a Kshatriya. Fame is all that one should acquire on earth. I, who was a master of the universe, must now acquire heaven by a fair fight. It cannot be otherwise." So saying, he and all his followers repaired to the banks of the Sarasvati of red waters, and bathed there (IX, i-v).

##### 281. THE EIGHTEENTH DAY OF BATTLE: SALYA AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

Then Duryodhana, at the advice of Asvatthaman, appointed Salya to be the leader of the Kuru hosts ; and Krishna, finding Yudhishthira alone as a match for him, asked him to oppose the king of Madra (IX, vi-vii).

##### 282. THE COMBAT.

When the night was ended, Duryodhana charged

all his warriors to fight the enemy unitedly and not separately; and then the battle began. Salya and Yudhishthira were opposed in a deadly fight, and Kripa and Kritavarman went to the assistance of the Madra king, while the *Pandava* monarch was helped by Satyaki, Bhima, Nakula and Sahadeva. Duryodhana rushed against Krishna and Arjuna, and Asvatthaman faced the five heroic sons of Draupadi. Then Arjuna engaged the son of Drona, and Duryodhana and Dhritadyumna fought a deadly fight (IX-viii-xvi).

### 283. THE DEATH OF SALYA.

Then the struggle between Salya and Yudhishthira deepened, and the latter hurled at him the dart of Siva, when the king of Madra dropped down on the earth like a mountain summit clapped by a thunderbolt (IX, xvi-xvii).

### 284. A GENERAL FIGHT.

After the death of Salya the Kuru troops fled in all directions, but the fight still continued. Duryodhana, Asvatthaman and Sakuni faced the *Pandava* hosts, and wrought great havoc in their ranks. Then, seeing the enemy approach, Dhananjaya (Arjuna) said to the son of Devaki (Krishna), "Today is the eighteenth day of battle; O Janardana. Drive the horses fearlessly and enter their ranks. Today the hostilities must end." The battle then raged yet more fiercely, and the surviving sons of Dhritarashtra, all except Duryodhana, rushed out at Bhima, who assailed them in return, and put them all to death. Then Sakuni proceeded against Sahadeva, who



rushed against him and struck him dead (IX, xviii-xxviii).

### 285. THE ATTEMPT OF DURYODHANA.

Seeing his warriors slain and his army defeated, Duryodhana was filled with rage; and, collecting together the residue of his forces, launched his final attack against the *Pandavas*; but all his men were killed by the enemy. Eleven *Akshauhinis* of troops collected by him had been slain by the *Pandavas*, and now, wounded and stupefied, he alone remained, with *Asvatthaman*, *Kritavarman* and *Kripa* as survivors of the hosts. *Sanjaya* was allowed by the grace of *Dhrishtadyumna* to escape unhurt; and *Yuyutsu*, the son of *Dhritarashtra* by a *Vaisya* woman, who had joined the *Pandavas* at the commencement of the fight, returned to *Hastinapura* with the permission of *Yudhishthira* and *Krishna*, for the protection of the people (IX, xxix).

### 286. DURYODHANA IN THE LAKE.

Duryodhana made up his mind to fly from the field, and turning his face eastward and taking his mace with him, made his way to a lake, called *Dvaipayana*, and desired to go into its depth. By his power of illusion (*Maya*) he charmed the waters of the lake, wide as the Ocean itself, to make room for him, and, converting them into a solid substance, rested there (IX, xxix-xxx).

The three surviving Kuru warriors, *Asvatthaman*, *Kritavarman* and *Kripa*, hearing of his whereabouts from *Sanjaya*, made their way to the lake

and saw him there. They spoke to him and advised him to fight; and he told them of his intention to rest there for the night, and to resume the fight the next day. They then took leave and went away; and as the sun had set, they rested themselves under a banian tree (IX, xxx).

The sons of *Pandū*, desirous of putting an end to the evil policy of *Duryodhana*, had sent out spies in all directions; and, having been apprised of his whereabouts by some hunters, came to the bank of the lake (IX, xxx).

#### 287. KRISHNA'S ADVICE TO PANDAVAS.

They saw that *Duryodhana* had charmed the waters of the lake with his power of illusion (*Maya*), and taken refuge there; and *Krishna* bade them destroy with their own power of illusion (*Maya*) the illusion (*Maya*) of *Duryodhana*. "Apply your power of illusion to the waters," said he, "and kill this *Duryodhana* who is a master of illusion." Thereupon *Yudhishthira* called upon *Duryodhana* to come out of his concealment, and act according to the injunctions of the Scriptures and fight. *Duryodhana* wanted some time for rest, and offered to retire to the forest, leaving the whole earth to the *Pandavas*. But they challenged him again to fight, and he agreed, offering to fight all of them together if they so desired (IX, xxx-xxxi).

#### 288. THE CHALLENGE.

Thereupon said *Yudhishthira*, "By good luck, O mighty hero, your heart is bent on battle,

Fight any one of us, with whatever weapons you like; and if you succeed, you shall become king again. If not, slain by us, go to heaven instead (IX, xxxii).

#### 289. THE FIGHT WITH MACE.

Duryodhana agreed, selected the mace for his weapon, and challenged any one of the *Pandava* brothers to fight with him. Then, cutting through the solidified waters, he rose, and stood with his mace,—while his limbs were all covered with blood,—ready to fight (IX, xxxii).

#### 290. THE ANXIETY OF KRISHNA.

Yudhishthira asked him to put on his golden armour, and once again repeated his offer that if he succeeded in slaying any one of the five brothers, he should rule as king. But *Krishna* was filled with anxiety, for he knew that, with a view to kill *Bhima*, Duryodhana had practised with the mace upon a statue of iron, and no one could slay him (Duryodhana) in a fair fight. But he thought that *Bhima* alone was equal to the task, and *Bhima* too was filled with joy at the prospect of a fight with him, and *Krishna's* anxiety melted away; and when Duryodhana offered to fight with any one of the five brothers, *Bhima* accepted the challenge with delight (IX, xxxii-xxxiii).

#### 291. BALARAMA AS A WITNESS.

When the combatants, Duryodhana and *Bhima*, were ready and the fight was about to begin, *Rama*, the brother of *Krishna*, came to witness the skill of his two disciples. Refusing to take

any side himself, he had gone away on a pilgrimage to the *Sarasvati*, and only returned to witness the combat (IX, xxxiv-xxxv).

#### 292. THE FIGHT.

Bhīma and Duryodhana rushed against each other. Bhīma whirled his weapon, moved about in beautiful circles, and advanced and receded. He then stood immovable and, facing his enemy, struck. Duryodhana also did the same. Both were experts in mace-fighting, and moved about in circles and seemed to play with each other; and at one time Bhīma, and at another Duryodhana seemed to prevail (IX, lvi-lvii).

#### 293. KRISHNA'S OPINION AND ADVICE.

The combat went on for a time, and Krishna, asked by Arjuna about the respective merits of the two, replied, "The instruction received by both has been equal. Bhīma, however, is possessed of greater strength, while Duryodhana is possessed of greater skill and has worked harder. If Bhīma were to fight fairly, he would never succeed. If, however, he fights unfairly, he will surely be able to kill Duryodhana. The Asuras were defeated by the gods through deception; Indra deprived Vritra of his energy by an act of deception; so let Bhīma put forth his power by means of deception. At the time of gambling Bhīma had promised to break the thigh of Duryodhana with his mace in a fight. Let him fulfil his vow, and, by means of deception, kill the Kuru king who is made of deception." (IX, lviii.)

## 294. THE DEATH OF DURYODHANA.

Having heard these words of Kesava (*Krishna*), Dhananjaya struck his own left thigh in the presence of *Bhīma*; and, understanding that sign, *Bhīma* began to move about with his uplifted mace. Duryodhana too moved about beautifully and with great activity, in order to kill his foe. The two rushed at each other and all their limbs were bruised and bathed in blood. Then Duryodhana, desiring to thwart *Bhīma*'s blow, thought of the manœuvre called *Avasthāna*, and wanted to jump up to beguile his foe; but *Bhīma*, understanding his object, struck his thighs with his mace, and broke them, and the king fell down on the earth (IX, lviii).

## 295. THE RESULT OF DURYODHANA'S FALL.

All around began to tremble as he fell; swift coursing rivers began to flow in opposite directions; women seemed to look like men and men like women when he fell; and, seeing these wonderful portents, the *Panchalas* and *Pandavas* were filled with anxiety. Then the gods and *Gandharvas*, who had assembled to witness the combat, went away to their regions, talking about that wonderful battle (IX, lviii).

## 296. THE ANGER OF BALARAMA.

But, seeing Duryodhana struck at his thighs, the powerful Rama became angry, and said, "Shame on *Bhīma*. Never before has such an act, as has been done by *Vrikodara* (*Bhīma*), been seen in an encounter with the mace. No limb below the navel should be struck. This is the rule laid down

in the treatises." Saying this, he rushed towards Bhima; but Kesava (*Krishna*) caught him in his arms, and the two brothers, the one dark in complexion and the other fair, shone like the Sun and Moon in the evening sky. Then *Krishna* calmed the angry *Rama*, and he was pacified (IX, lix-lx).

#### 297. THE PANDAVAS IN DURYODHANA'S TENT.

The surviving warriors then retired to their tents; but the *Pandavas*, followed by *Yuyutsu*, proceeded to the tent of *Duryodhana* (IX, lxii).

#### 298. THE BURNING OF ARJUNA'S CAR.

Arriving there, they got down from their cars, and *Krishna* asked *Arjuna* to take down his bow *Gandiva* and the two inexhaustible quivers. As soon as he did so, the celestial Ape that was his standard, disappeared from the car, and the car itself caught fire, and was burnt to ashes. "That car," said *Krishna*, "had already been consumed by *Drona* and *Karna* with their celestial weapons. It was because I sat upon it during the battle, that it did not break into pieces. It has been reduced to ashes after I have left it and you have achieved your object." (IX, lxii.)

#### 299. OGHAVATI.

The *Pandavas* then took rest in the camp of the *Kurus* for a time; and then the illustrious *Kesava* said, "We should, as the first sacred act, remain out of the camp for the night;" and so, coming out, they took their quarters for the night on the banks of the sacred stream called *Oghavati* (IX, lxii).

### 300. KRISHNA IN HASTINAPURA.

Then, in order to comfort the helpless *Gandhari*, who had lost all her sons, *Krishna* mounted his car and set out for *Hastinapura*. The heart of *Gandhari* was burning with grief, but after hearing *Krishna* she was comforted. Then she covered her face and began to weep. Then *Krishna*, knowing that *Drona's* son had an evil design, suddenly took leave; and when he had departed, *Vyasa* began to comfort the king. *Krishna* then returned to the camp of the *Pandavas* (IX, lxii-lxiii).

### 301. THE SURVIVORS OF KĀURAVAS.

In the meanwhile *Asvatthaman*, *Kripa* and *Kṛitavarman*, having heard of *Duryodhana's* fall, hurried to the place and saw the son of *Dhṛitarashtra* lying low on the ground. They got down from their cars and sat down on the ground around him, and comforted him in the last moments of his life (IX, lxv).

### 302. THE HOPE OF DURYODHANA.

"If *Charvaka*, the mendicant devotee," said *Duryodhana*, "who is a master of speech, learns everything, he will, forsooth, avenge my death." (IX, lxiv).

### 303. THE VOW OF ASVATTHAMAN.

Then *Asvatthaman*, whose heart was filled with rage, vowed that he would destroy all the *Panchalas* that very day; and, hearing this, *Duryodhana* was glad, and installed him as his successor in arms to carry on the fight (IX, lxv.)

## X. SAUPTIKA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXII

#### THE SLAUGHTER IN SLEEP

##### 304. THE SCHEME OF ASVATTHAMAN.

THE three heroes, Asvatthaman, Kritavarman, and Kripa then went together towards the south, and entered a great forest and took rest under a great banian tree. They laid themselves on the bare earth ; and while his two companions, wounded and exhausted, went to sleep, the son of Drona kept awake, burning with anger and grief. As he looked, he saw that the banian tree was covered with crows; and, as they were sleeping in security, a terrible owl suddenly and secretly appeared, and killed a large number of his sleeping enemies. Witnessing this sight, Asvatthaman began to think, and resolved to secure the destruction of his enemies by a deceitful act. He then woke his companions from sleep, and they listened to his scheme and were filled with shame. Kripa tried to dissuade him from his course, but in vain ; and then they followed him reluctantly to the gates of the enemy camp. Then Asvatthaman saw a strange sight,—the figure of a mighty Being, endowed with the effulgence of the Sun or the Moon, guarding the entrance. Drona's son exhausted all his weapons on him ; and then he saw the whole sky covered with images of Janardana (Krishna). Realising that success was impossible without



divine favour, he sought the protection of Mahadeva, and offered himself as a sacrifice before him. Mahadeva, seeing that the hour of the Panchalas had come, entered the body of Asvatthaman, and gave him an excellent sword wherewith to slay them (X, i-vii).

### 305. THE SLAUGHTER OF PANCHALAS.

Drona's son then returned to his companions waiting for him at the gate. He entered the camp of the *Pandavas* and, striking the Panchala prince (*Dhrishtadyumna*) with his feet, pressed him down on the earth with his hands, and killed him like a lion killing an infuriate elephant. After this he slew a number of other heroes, including the sons of *Draupadi*, *Sikhandin*, the residue of the *Somakas*, and the warriors of king *Virata*. He went about slaying all, and his two companions set fire to the *Pandava* camp and all of it was reduced to ashes. Then, after all were slain, a fearful silence filled the night, and *Asvatthaman* and his companions went away rejoicing at what they had done. It was possible for them to do all this because of the absence of the sons of *Pandu*, *Kesava* and also *Satyaki* (X, viii).

### 306. THE SURVIVORS OF THE PANDAVAS.

All the *Panchalas*, all the sons of *Draupadi*, all the *Somakas*, and the remnants of the *Matsyas* had been slain. Only the five *Pandavas* brothers, *Krishna* and *Satyaki*, who were absent from the camp that night, survived (X, viii).

### 307. THE GEM OF ASVATTHAMAN.

When the day dawned, *Yudhishthira* heard of

the news of the havoc of the night ; and Draupadi, hearing of the destruction of her sons, fell down, afflicted with sorrow and grief. When she regained consciousness, she called upon the *Pandavas* to wreak vengeance on *Drona's* son, or else she would die. But *Asvatthaman* had retired to a distant forest, and it was impossible to engage him in a fight. " I have heard," said Draupadi, "that *Drona's* son has a gem on his head, born with him. Bring that gem to me after his death in battle. I shall place it on your head, O king, and live. That is my resolve." Thereupon *Bhima*, who was unable to bear Draupadi's grief, got on his car, and making *Nakula* his charioteer, went in pursuit of *Asvatthaman*. Then *Krishna*, desirous of befriending *Bhima*, followed him, accompanied by *Yudhishtira* and *Arjuna*, and they soon overtook him. Then *Bhima* hastened to the banks of the *Bhagirathi*, and saw the illustrious, dark-complexioned and island-born *Vyasa*, sitting near the edge of the water, encircled by many *Rishis*, with *Drona's* son among them. He rushed towards him and challenged him to a fight (X, ix-xiii).

### 308. THE WEAPON OF ASVATTHAMAN.

*Asvatthaman* thereupon discharged his celestial weapon for the destruction of the *Pandavas*, when *Krishna*, knowing his intention, asked *Arjuna* to discharge his own celestial weapon to neutralise it. The battle between the two weapons was dreadful to behold, and *Narada* and *Vyasa* interposed to pacify them. Thereupon *Dhananjaya* withdrew his weapon, and was able to do so because he was truthful and pure. But, as *Asvatthaman*

had discharged his weapon through fear of Bhīma, he was not able to withdraw it at all. But, in order to protect the *Pandavas*, he threw it into the womb of the *Pandava* women to make them sterile, and it pierced the foetus in the womb of Uttara, the daughter of Virata and the wife of Abhimanyu. As a result of this the foetus was killed, but Krishna revived it by his divine power again, and out of it was born Parikshit, the successor of the *Pandava* race (X, xiv-xvi).

Then Asvatthaman made over his gem to the *Pandavas*, and cheerlessly proceeded to the forest; and they all returned with the gem to Draupadi, and gave it to her. She gave it again to Yudhishthira to wear, and he shone with it like the mountain with the Moon above (X, xvi).

Then Yudhishthira asked Krishna how it was that Asvatthaman was able to slay Dhrishtadyumna, before whom even Drona was unable to stand. "It was done through the power of Mahadeva," said Krishna, "he who is the beginning, middle, and end of all creatures, through whose power the whole universe acts and moves." (X, xvii-xviii.)

## XI. ŚTRĪ PARVA

### CHAPTER XXIII

#### THE WAIL OF WOMEN

##### 309. THE GRIEF OF WOMEN.

WHEN king Dhṛitarashṭra heard the news of the loss of his hundred sons, he fell down on the earth like a tree uprooted by the wind. But Vidura comforted him and asked him not to grieve, for his sons had obtained the highest end. Vyasa also consoled him, reminding him that the destruction of the Kurus was inevitable. The blind old king then bade that Gandhārī, Kuntī, and other ladies should come out; and they, who had not been seen before this by the very celestials, were seen by the common people now. With beautiful, dishevelled hair, with ornaments cast away, these ladies, each clad in a single piece of cloth, proceeded sadly to the field where lay their dear ones slain, weeping and crying aloud in grief (XI, i-x).

##### 310. YUDHISHṬHIRA MEETS DHṚITARASHṬRA.

Yudhishṭhira, hearing that Dhṛitarashṭra had left the city of Hastinapura, set out to meet him, accompanied by his brothers, Kṛishṇa, and others. They saw on the banks of the Ganga the blind old king and thousands of ladies afflicted with grief. Yudhishṭhira came up to the king, and touched his feet in salutation, and his brothers did the same (XI, xii).

## 311. THE STATUE OF IRON.

Dhritarashtra embraced Yudhishthira, and then, as came the turn of Bhīma, desired to crush him in his embrace. But Krishna, divining his purpose, dragged away the real Bhīma, and presented in his stead an iron statue of the prince. Dhritarashtra, thinking it to be the real Bhīma, held his arms tightly round the statue and broke it into pieces. His own breast was bruised in the attempt; he vomitted blood, and dropped down on the ground; and, filled with grief, began to weep aloud and cry, "Alas, O Bhīma! O Bhīma!" But Krishna comforted him, and informed him that the real Bhīma was still alive (XI, xii).

The Pandavas then went to see queen Gandhārī; and, fearing lest she should curse them, Vyasa came to prepare her mind and bade her be calm and remember her own saying, "Victory is where righteousness is." Gandhārī, having shaken off her anger, comforted the Pandavas like their own mother. Kuntī too, who had seen her sons after a long time, covered her face and wept. She then embraced them all, and wept again with Draupadī who had lost all her sons (XI, xiii-xv).

## 312. THE CURSE OF GANDHARĪ.

Then, at the command of Vyasa king Dhritarashtra and all the sons of Pandu, led by Yudhishthira, with Krishna and all the Kuru ladies, went to the battlefield. Having reached Kurukshetra, those widowed ladies beheld their brothers and sons and sires and husbands lying on the ground, and began

to cry piteously. Then Gandhari, beholding the universal destruction of the Kurus, and filled with grief, addressed Krishna, and said, "Look, O Madhava, at these daughters-in-law of mine, deprived of their husbands, with dishevelled hair, crying piteously. See the field covered with mothers of heroes, deprived of their children. Behold those ornaments of men,—Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Abhimanyu, Jayadratha, Drupada, and Salya and others,—lifeless on the ground. O Kesava, can there be a sight more sorrowful than this? Look, O Madhava, at my beloved son, Duryodhana, lying there. See my hundred sons. See, where the daughter of Virata is bewailing by the side of her husband, Abhimanyu; and behold Karna, foremost among men. See, O Janardana, Jayadratha, my son-in-law. Can there be a greater grief for me than to see my daughter and daughters-in-law widowed all? There lies Salya, beautiful like the moon; there Drona, the best of Brahmanas. Alas! there they lie, all slain! You, O Krishna, could have prevented their slaughter, but you did not. Therefore I curse you, O holder of the discus and the mace! Be you the destroyer of your kinsmen too; and in the thirty-sixth year from this you will, after bringing about the death of your kinsmen and friends and sons, perish by disgraceful means in the forest; and the ladies of your family, deprived of their friends, kinsmen, and sons, shall weep and cry even as these of the Bharata race." (XI, xvi-xxv.)

Hearing these words, Krishna smiled and said, "There is none in the world, save myself, who can exterminate the Vrishnis, and I am trying to

destroy them. O you of excellent vows, you have only helped me to accomplish my task by your curse. The Yadavas will be killed by one another. But rise, O *Gandhari*, and do not grieve. A saintly woman bears children for the practice of austerities; a Vaisya woman to increase the number of keepers of cattle; a *Sudra* woman to add to the number of servants; but a Princess like you brings forth sons but to be slain on the battlefield." Hearing this, *Gandhari*, with her heart stricken with grief, remained silent, and could not speak (XI, xxv-xxvi).

### 313. THE FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

Then, as *Dhritarashtra* wished that the funeral ceremonies of all who were slain should be duly performed, *Yudhishthira* ordered the priests to perform their rites ; and all, headed by the blind old king, proceeded to the banks of the *Ganga*. The *Kuru* ladies, stricken with grief, offered their oblations of water to the dead; and, as they were performing this rite, the access to the stream became easy to all (XI, xxvi-xxvii).

Then *Kunti*, laden with grief, addressed her sons, and said, "This hero, killed by *Arjuna* in battle, whom you knew as the son of *Radha*, was your eldest brother, born of me by the Sun. Offer your oblations of water to him." Hearing these words of their mother, the *Pandavas* were filled with sorrow, and began to grieve for *Karna*. Then *Yudhishthira* offered oblations of water to his deceased brother ; and then the king, with his mind greatly agitated, rose from the waters of the *Ganga* (XI, xxvii).

## XII. SANTI PARVA

### CHAPTER XXIV

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE

##### 314. THE DOUBTS OF YUDHISHTHIRA.

AFTER King Yudhishthira had performed the water rites, many Rishis and sages came to see the king, and they all consoled and comforted him. But his mind was still heavy with grief, and it was in vain that his brothers and Draupadī counselled him to be an active ruler of the earth. "I know both the Vedas and the Scriptures that lead to the attainment of Brahma," said he. "In the Vedas there are both kinds of precepts, *viz.*, those that teach action, and those that teach the renunciation of action. The Scriptures are conflicting, and their conclusions are based on reason. Having made the Soul gradually come towards itself, having controlled all mental desires, and having cast off all kinds of action, one may become perfectly independent and happy. When there is such a path that is followed by the righteous, and is attainable by Knowledge, why, O Arjuna, do you speak highly of wealth that is full of danger?" (XII, i-xix.)

##### 315. THE OPINION OF DEVASTHANA AND VYASA.

Thereupon the great ascetic, Devasthana, replied, "O Bhārata, you must know that even the ascetics are devoted to action;" and Vyasa



informed him that the highest religion, as sanctioned by the Scriptures, consisted in the duties of a householder. "You know," said he, "the duties of a king. A Kshatriya must always have strength, and upon that depends his power to chastise. A battle has been described as a Sacrifice for a king; and by governing his kingdom with intelligence and policy, kindness and impartiality, a great king sports in the regions of the celestials after death. O son of Kuntî, you have been created by your Maker to engage in action. Success arises from action. You cannot, O king, avoid action." (XII, xx-xxvii).

But Yudhishthira was still disconsolate; and so Krishna comforted him, and said, "O foremost of men, do not grieve. They who have been slain in battle, will never come back again. They are like objects that one gets in a dream, which disappear when he awakes." Then again Vyasa tried to console him, whereupon Yudhishthira wished to know in detail the duties of a king, and the paths of morality. "If, O king," said Vyasa, "you wish to hear of duties and morality at length, ask Bhishma, that old grandfather of the Kurus. He alone can remove your doubts." Then again, counselled by Krishna, Yudhishthira shook off his grief; and, accompanied by Kesava, Rishis, Brahmanas, and his brothers, he mounted his car and entered the city of Hastinapura (XII, xxviii-xxxviii).

The citizens gave them a great welcome as they came; the Brahmanas blessed them, and Yudhishthira ruled as king (XII, xxxix).

## 316. THE ADVICE OF KRISHNA.

One day Yudhishthira saw Krishna rapt in meditation, and asked him the cause. "That foremost of men, Bhishma," said Krishna, "who is lying on a bed of arrows, is thinking of me. My mind was therefore concentrated on him. Controlling all his senses, and concentrating his Mind by means of his Understanding (Buddhi), he sought my refuge; and so I too had fixed my mind on him. He knows the present, future, and the past; therefore, O Yudhishthira, humbly approaching him, ask him about all you wish to learn." Hearing these words of Krishna, Yudhishthira and his brothers, headed by Krishna, went where Bhishma lay, —he who was to pass when the Sun turned its course towards the north (XII, xlvii).

## 317. BHISHMA WORSHIPS KRISHNA.

The grandfather of the Bharatas lay on his bed of arrows, surrounded by Vyasa and other Rishis, Brahmanas, and sages; and, with a pure heart and folded hands, he was thinking of Krishna in mind, word, and deed. "O Krishna," said he, "O universal Soul, O Lord of all creatures, I seek your refuge with all my heart. You are without beginning and without end. You have the universe for your work; and this universe, consisting of matter and mind, exists in your eternal and all-pervading Soul like flowers strung together on a thread. You are worshipped under four forms and secret names, Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha.

You are beyond the perception of the senses and Buddhi; you have many forms; you are self-born; you are gold hued; you are the Soul of the Sun. Salutations to you in the form of Soma; salutations to you in the form of Sacrifice; salutations to you in the form of Desire; salutations to you in your form of *Maya*; salutations to you in your form of Water; salutations to you in your form of Action; salutations to you in your form as Air; salutations to you in your form as the Universe. You are life, you are power, you are knowledge,—you are All. I seek your refuge and am devoted to you, desirous of obtaining a happy end.” (XII, xlviii.)

### 318. KRISHNA ASKS BHISHMA TO TEACH YUDHISHTHIRA.

Then Krishna, Yudhishthira and his brothers, and all those persons headed by Kripa, proceeded to Kurukshetra and came to where Bhishma lay on his bed of arrows, shining like the evening sun covered with his own rays. They all saluted him and took their seats around him; and then Kesava asked him to dispel the doubts of Yudhishthira. “All the Scriptures,” said Krishna, “treating of duty and practice, are centred in your memory, and there is no one else who can drive out the sorrow of the son of Pandu. O you of pure heart, fifty-six days still remain for you to live. Do you speak words of truth, containing morality, profit and Yoga to Yudhishthira, who is firm in truth, but whose learning has been clouded by grief.” (XII, xlix-lij.)

But Bhishma hesitated : " I have not the power to tell anything," said he. " Do you speak to Yudhishthira yourself. How can one like me, a disciple before his preceptor, speak, when you, the eternal Creator of the universe, are present ?" But Krishna blessed him with unclouded perception and memory and a clear understanding, and Bhishma agreed. Then Krishna and the Pandavas retired for the night (XII, liii).

### 319. BHISHMA'S DISCOURSE.

The next morning they came once more to where the hero lay. At the sight of Krishna his burning, exhaustion, and pain disappeared; and by his grace he saw distinctly the past, present and the future, and remembered the duties laid down in the Vedas and Vedangas. Then, having saluted Krishna and Bhishma, and taken permission of all elders assembled there, Yudhishthira questioned Bhishma about Religion, Profit and Pleasure (Dharma, Artha, and Kama), and the latter discoursed on the eternal duties of men. " O son," said he, " you should always exert yourself. Exertion and Destiny are said to be equal ; but I consider exertion to be superior. A king should always address himself to action." (XII, lv-lvii.)

Thereafter Bhishma described to him the duties of a king to his people and others, the organization and prosperity of the state, and the art of peace and war. He told him of the duties of the four castes and the four modes of life, and the merit accruing to each. He said that the king was a father to his people, and explained

to him the science and art of government; how to protect a kingdom, vanquish a foe, and succeed in advancing one's own subjects. He told him how a king's ministers should act, how he should win the hearts of friends and foes, and how he should satisfy the law-makers, courtiers, commanders, and counsellors. Further, he described to him the kind of city in which a king should live, how a kingdom may be firmly established and protected, how to lead troops in battle and succeed in war, and how to treat a foe. Then Bhīshma explained what is Truth, Righteousness, and the way to be happy; what is Hope and how it is born; what is Morality, Religion, Profit and Pleasure. Again he told him how a depleted treasury may be filled, how ministers won over, and secrets preserved. He further explained to him the cause of sin, and said that covetousness is the root of all evil. He dwelt on the importance of penance, described the marks of truth and malevolence, and the cause of anger and lust (XII, lvii-clxvi).

Then, turning to higher things, Yudhishthira asked about the origin of the universe, the nature of life, and all about this and the next world. "Regarding this," said Bhīshma, "the great sage Bhrigu spoke to Bharadvāja as follows: —

### 320. THE DISCOURSE OF BHRIGU.

"There is a primeval Being, known to the great Rishis by the name of Manas (Mind). He is without beginning and without end. He is without decay and is immortal. He is unmanifest, he is eternal.

By him are all creatures made, and through him they die (XII, clxxxii).

‘ He first created a Divine Being, called Mahat. Mahat created Consciousness (Ahankāra), who created Ether or Space. Self-born Manas created a divine Lotus of energy, and from that Lotus sprang the first Omniscient Lord, Brahman, the creator of all mobile and immobile things. The Srutis say that as soon as he was born he said, “I am he,” and so he is called by the name of Consciousness or Ahankāra [I-ness] (XII, clxxx).

‘ Water is the life of life of all creatures. All things which have a form are all transformations of life. They have all been produced by Water solidified. This Water originated like something darker within Darkness, when the universe was asleep at the beginning of creation, without sun or moon, stars or wind. From the pressure of Water, when the latter filled all Space (Ether), rose Wind; from the friction of Water and Wind rose Fire (Light) which dispelled the darkness which covered all Space. Then Fire was turned into a liquid (Water); and the liquid portion of Fire, being solidified again, became what is known as Earth (XII, clxxxiii).

‘ Everything which is infinite or vast is spoken of as great, and so are the five Elements called Great Creatures. Activity is associated with Wind; Sound with Space; Heat with Fire; the liquid juices are described as Water; flesh and bones form the Earth. Thus are all bodies made of the five elements. The five senses are also made

of the five elements. The Ear is formed of the property of Ether; Nose of Earth; Tongue of Water; Touch of Wind; and the Eyes of Fire (XII, clxxxiv).

‘ Trees also have Space (Ether) within them; they have heat within them; they have perception of touch; they have vision; they have scent; they draw water by their roots; they catch all sorts of disease; they can be cured; they have perception of taste; they are subject to pleasure and pain; they have life; they are not inanimate (XII, clxxxiv).

‘ Through the vital breath, called *Prana*, is a living creature able to move about; through that, called *Vyana*, he acts; that, called *Apana*, goes downwards; that, called *Samana*, lives within the heart; and through that, called *Udana*, one is enabled to speak. These are the five vital airs that cause an embodied creature to live and move (XII, clxxxiv).

‘ Through the element Earth, an embodied creature perceives the properties of Scent; from Water he perceives Taste; from Fire, as represented by the Eyes, he perceives Form; from the Wind he perceives Touch; and from Ether Sound. Scent, Taste, Vision, Touch and Sound are the common properties of all mobile and immobile objects (XII, clxxxiv).

‘ Sound pervades the entire Space (Ether). The learned describe Sound as born of Ether. When related to the various kinds of Touch, which is a property of Wind, it may be heard. It cannot,

however, be heard when the different kinds of Touch are not used (XII, clxxxiv).

‘ Heat lives within the head and protects the body. The vital air, called *Prana*, living within the head and the heat that is there, creates all kinds of exertion. That *Prana* is the living creature, the universal Self, the eternal Being, the Mind, Intellect (*Buddhi*) and Consciousness of all living creatures and all the objects of the senses. It is *Prana* that makes the living creature move about and act. Heat dwells in the vital airs ; and the Yogis succeed in attaining to *Brahma* by drawing the Soul (*Atman*) within the brain (XII, clxxxv).

‘ No living creature is ever destroyed. The death of a creature is only a change of form. The body alone is dissolved (XII, clxxxvii).

‘ The whole universe is made of Water. Water is the form of all embodied creatures. In that Water lives the Soul, which is seen in the Mind. That Soul is the creator *Brahman*, who exists in all things (XII, clxxxvii).

‘ When the Soul is endued with ordinary attributes (*Gunas*), it is called *Kshetrajna* (Knower of the Field or the body). When freed from these attributes, it is designated *Paramatman* or supreme Self (XII, clxxxvii).

‘ The Soul lives in the body like a drop of water on a lotus. The learned hold that it has Consciousness and the attributes of life. It acts and causes everything to act (XII, clxxxvii).



‘There is no distinction between the different castes. The whole world at first consisted of Brāhmanas (XII, clxxxviii).

‘The Earth gives birth to all creatures. Females partake of her nature. The male animal is like Prajapati himself. The seminal fluid is the creative energy (XII, cxc).

‘Towards the north, on the other side of the Himalayas, is a sacred region, called the other world. This region, where we live, is the Field of Action. One reaps the fruits of actions according to the life he has led,” (XII, cxcii.)

### 321. THE DISCOURSE OF BHISHMA.

Asked by Yudhishthira again, Bhishma said, “Earth, Air, Space, Water and Light are the Great Creatures. These form both the origin and destruction of all created beings. As a tortoise extends his limbs and withdraws them again, so the Supreme Soul creates all objects and again withdraws them into himself.

“Sound, the organ of hearing (Ears) and all holes originate from Ether; Touch, Skin, and action are the three attributes of Wind; Form, Eye, and digestion are the attributes of Fire; Taste, Tongue, and all liquid secretions are the attributes of Water; and Smell, Nose, and the body are the three qualities of Earth.

“The great elements are five; the Mind is the sixth; the seventh is Understanding (Buddhi), and the eighth is the Soul,

“The Senses are for perceiving; the Mind creates uncertainty; the Understanding brings all

knowledge to certainty ; the Soul exists as a witness.

“The three qualities, Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, depend on the senses, the Mind, and the Understanding. They lead the Understanding to worldly attachments; and, in this, the Understanding is identical with the senses and the Mind. When the Understanding is destroyed, the three Qualities cannot produce action.

“The universe of mobile and immobile objects consists of Intelligence (Buddhi). It is from Intelligence that everything originates, and into it everything subsides. The Scriptures declare that everything is a manifestation of Intelligence. When Intelligence desires anything, it is called the Mind. The five senses are its foundation, and on them it depends.

“Mark the difference between the two subtle things: Intelligence and the Soul. Intelligence displays Gunas, the Soul does not. They (Intelligence and the Soul) exist in a state of union, and are yet different from each other. The Qualities (Gunas) do not know the Soul, but the Soul knows them all. The Soul is a spectator of the Gunas, and considers them as emanating from itself. Acting through the senses, the Mind, and the Understanding,—all of which are inactive and have no self-consciousness,—the Soul discovers all objects like a lamp showing all things around.” (XII, cxciv.)

### 322. THE OPINION OF MANU.

Then Bhishma cited the opinion of Manu, who

said,—“Creatures have been engendered by Mind and Action. Actions have the three Gunas for their soul, and the fruits of action depend on the Mind (XII,cci).

“He from whom the universe has sprung, is neither female, nor male, nor of the neuter gender. He is neither existent, nor non-existent, nor existent-non-existent. Only those who are acquainted with Brahma can see him.

“From that eternal and undecaying One first originated Space (Ether). From Space came Wind ; from Wind came Light (Fire) ; from Light came Water; and from Water the Universe.

“The bodies of all objects enter, after dissolution, into Water; thence into Light or Heat; thence into Wind; and thence into Space. They who seek liberation have not to return from Space. They attain to Brahma.

“The Skin perceives touch; the Tongue taste; the Nose scent ; the Eye forms; and the Ear sounds.

“Having withdrawn the tongue from tastes, the nose from scents, the eye from forms, and the ear from sounds, one sees his own Self.

“It has been said that that which is the cause of the actor, act, and the material of action, is called the Self or the Soul. The Soul does not undergo birth, growth, decay, and destruction. With the senses, the Soul yet performs no acts. The senses do not apprehend the Soul. The Soul, however, apprehends them all.

“The five attributes (Sound, Touch, Sight, Taste, and Smell) dwell in the five principal elements (Ether, Air, Fire, Water, and Earth). The fivefold objects of the senses dwell in the senses. All these again follow the Mind. The Mind follows the Understanding (Buddhi); and the Understanding follows the Soul (XII, ccii).

“From the Unmanifest originates the Soul; from the Soul Buddhi (Understanding); from Buddhi Mind; and when the Mind is united with the senses, it apprehends Sound and the other objects of the senses. All objects that the Mind apprehends through the senses can be withdrawn into the Mind; the Mind can be withdrawn into Buddhi; Buddhi into the Soul; and the Soul into the Supreme. The senses cannot know the Mind; the Mind cannot apprehend Buddhi; Buddhi cannot apprehend the Soul. The Soul, however, sees them all (XII, cciv).

“When the Understanding (Buddhi), though endowed with the quality of Certainty, lives in the Mind, it is nothing but the Mind. When Buddhi becomes freed from the three Guṇas, then only can it attain to Brahma (XII, ccv).

“From Knowledge originates Desire; from Desire Resolution; from Resolution Action; and from Action arises its fruit. Fruits therefore have actions for their cause. Actions have Understanding for their root; Understanding has Knowledge for its root; and Knowledge has the Soul for its cause.

“Water is superior to Earth; Light (Fire) is superior to Water; Wind is superior to Light;

Ether is superior to Wind ; Mind is superior to Ether ; Understanding is superior to the Mind ; Time (Sun energy) is superior to Understanding : and the divine Vishnu, who is identical with this universe, is superior to Time. He is without beginning, middle or end." (XII ccvi.)

### 323. THE DISCOURSE OF BHISHMA.

Then, on further inquiry from Yudhishthira, Bhishma said :— " Govinda (*Krishna*) is the lord of all creatures. He lay on the surface of the Waters ; and, while thus floating on the Waters, he created Consciousness, the first born of all beings in the universe. Consciousness gave rise to a beautiful Lotus, effulgent like the Sun, out of the navel of the Supreme. Then the illustrious and divine Brahman, the Grandfather of all creatures, came into being from that Lotus, and he brought into existence the whole world (XII, ccvii).

"*Vasudeva* (*Krishna*) is the Wheel of Time, without beginning and without end. Existence and non-existence are the qualities by which his real nature is known. Having reduced everything to nothing, he once more, in the beginning of a new cycle, creates *Prakriti* ; and when *Prakriti* creates through the action of *Purusha*, the Universe, with all its potencies, springs forth.

"From the Unmanifest arises *Buddhi* (Understanding) ; *Buddhi* creates Consciousness (*Egoism* or *Ahankara*). From *Ahankara* arises Space ; from Space Wind ; from Wind Heat ; from Heat Water ; and from Water Earth. These Eight form Primordial

Prakṛiti and the whole Universe rests on them. From these eight have originated the five senses of knowledge, the five senses of action, the five objects of the senses, and the Mind, forming the sixteenth. The Ear, the Skin, the two Eyes, the Tongue, and the Nose are the five senses of knowledge. The two Feet, the Anus, the organ of generation, the two Arms, and the Tongue (Speech) are the five senses of action. Sound, Touch, Form, Taste, and Smell are the five objects of the senses. The Mind lives upon all the senses and their objects. In the perception of Taste, the Mind becomes the Tongue; and in Speech the Mind becomes words. Covered by the different senses, the Mind becomes all the objects which exist in its apprehension.

“Existence springs from Prakṛiti, which exists in that which is the Soul of all existent things. These existences, resting on the Supreme Being, who is above Prakṛiti, who is inactive, comprehend the entire universe of mobile and immobile objects.

This sacred building of nine doors (body) is endued with all these existences. That which is high above them, *viz.*, the Soul, lives within it (the body). Therefore it is called Purusha. The Soul is not subject to decay and death. It has knowledge of what is manifest and what is unmanifest. It is all-pervading, endued with qualities (Gunas), and the refuge of all forms of existence. Making the Ear to hear what it hears, it is the Soul that hears. Making the Eye to act, it is the Soul that sees. The bodily organs are not

the actors ; it is the Soul that is the doer of all deeds (XII, ccx).

“Women must be considered as instruments which set agoing the stream of creation. By their nature they are Kshetra (Field), and men Kshetrajna [Knowers of the Field] (XII, ccxiii).

“What is called Brahmacharya is considered as the means of attaining to Brahma. That pure state can be attained by means of the Understanding alone (XII, ccxiv).

“Both Prakriti and Purusha are without beginning and without end. Prakriti is endued with the three Qualities (Gunas), and is engaged in creation. Purusha apprehends all the changes of Prakriti ; he transcends all qualities. The divine Purusha has been described to be like a flash of lightning and is indestructible.” (XII, ccxvii.)

### 324. THE DISCOURSE OF VYASA.

Bhishma then cited the following views of Vyasa :—

\* THE MEASURE OF TIME.—“Five and ten winks of the eye make what is called a *Kashtha*. Thirty *Kashthas* make a *Kala*. Thirty *Kalas*, together with a tenth part of a *Kala*, make one *Muhurta*. Thirty *Muhurtas* make one Day and Night. Thirty Days and Nights make a Month ; and twelve Months make a Year.

“The Year is made up of two solar motions,—the northern and the southern. The Sun makes the day and night for men. A month of human

beings is equal to a day and night of the departed manes. A year of men is equal to a day and night of the gods.

“Four thousand celestial years is the duration of the first or Krita (Satya) Age; the morning of that cycle (Age) consists of four hundred years, and the evening also of four hundred years (making in all 4800 celestial years). Regarding the other cycles,—Treta, Dvapara, and Kali—the duration of each gradually decreases by a quarter in respect of both the principal period and the period of morning and evening time. Thus Treta consists of 3600, Dvapara of 2400, and Kali of 1200 celestial years. These twelve thousand celestial years, made up of 4800, 3600, 2400, and 1200 years of the four Ages, form what is called a Cycle; and a thousand such Cycles form a single Day of Brahma. The same is the duration of his Night. With the beginning of his Day, the Universe comes into being; and the period of universal dissolution is his Night. But on the expiry of his Night he awakes, modifies Buddhi, and causes Consciousness to arise; whence originates Mind, and the whole Universe becomes manifest once more (XII, ccxxxi).

“At the dawn of his Day he creates the Universe. Mahat or the principle of Greatness springs up first. Then Mahat is speedily changed into Mind. Urged by the desire of creating, Mind, which has Desire and Doubt for its leading signs, begins to create various kinds of objects by modifications of itself. Ether first originates from the Mind; know that its property is Sound. From Ether, by modi-



fication, originates Wind, and its property is Touch. From Wind, also by modification, arises Light (Fire), and it possesses the attribute of Form. From Light, by modification, arises Water, having Taste for its attribute. And from Water originates Earth, having Smell for its attribute. These are said to represent primary creation; and all these great entities form the constituent parts of the body. The Supreme Creator of all beings having, by his *Maya*, divided himself, enters into the subtle part of everything. It is he who creates all things, mobile and immobile (XII. ccx-xxii).

“But when his Day is gone, and comes his Night, he withdraws all things into himself. Then Agni, with his seven flames, begins to blaze. All things disappear into the Earth, and the Earth becomes shorn of its attribute, Smell. Then Water takes up the Earth and its attribute, Smell, and fills all space. Then the attribute of Water is taken up by Heat. Then the Wind takes up the attribute of Heat; and then Ether takes up the attribute of Wind. Then Ether, with Sound for its attribute, is swallowed up by the Mind, which is unmanifest; and this withdrawal of the manifest into the unmanifest Mind is called the destruction of the external Universe. Then the Moon, which makes the Mind, withdraws its attribute into itself. The Moon, characterized by Knowledge, is then brought under the Creator's sway; then Time swallows up this Knowledge; and, possessed of greater Knowledge, the Creator brings Time under his sway, and swallows up non-existence itself into his Soul. That

is the Unmanifest, and Supreme Brahma. That is the Eternal, and the Highest of all (XII, ccxx-xiii).

“All created beings have four kinds of birth. They are viviparous, oviparous, vegetables, and those born of filth.

“The gods know him as a *Brahmana* who is devoted to the knowledge of Brahma (XII, ccxxxvii)

“Regarding actions, some men hold that Exertion is their root. Others say that Necessity is their cause. Others again hold that Nature (*Prakriti*) is their cause. The Yogins, however, see Brahma as the universal cause of all (XII, ccxxxviii).

“The bodies of all embodied creatures are from Earth. Their humours originate from Water; their eyes from Light (Fire); *Prana*, *Apana* and other vital breaths depend on Air; and all apertures within them originate from Space (Ether).

“The Ears, Skin, Eyes, Tongue, and the Nose are the five senses of knowledge. Sound, Touch, Form, Taste, and Smell, are the objects of the senses. Like a charioteer driving his well-trained horses, the Mind moves the senses. Likewise the Understanding (*Buddhi*) is the lord of the Mind. The senses, the objects of the senses, the attributes of the objects of Nature, Mind, Understanding, the vital airs, and the individual Soul dwell in the bodies of all embodied ones.

“Transcending all things, the Soul lives in all creatures, mobile and immobile. All these worlds exist within the Supreme. His hands and feet are everywhere. His eyes, head, face and ears are everywhere. He is minuter than the minute, and he is the heart of all things. He enters the house of nine doors (body) and becomes engaged in action. The Supreme Soul becomes endued with the attribute of Action on account of motion, pleasure and pain, and variety of forms ; and that indestructible Soul, which is said to be endued with the attribute of Action, is nothing else than the indestructible Soul which is said to be inactive (XII, ccxxxix).

“The injunctions of the Vedas are twofold. They lay down the command, ‘Do all acts;’ and again declare, ‘Renounce actions.’ Corresponding to this there are two paths, the path of Action and the path of Knowledge. A Brahmacharin, a householder, a hermit, and a mendicant, all reach the same highest end by performing the duties of their respective modes of life (XII, ccxlix-cclii).

“This Universe of mobile and immobile objects has the five elements for its component parts. The great Creator of all things has, however, made an unequal distribution of these elements for serving different ends.

“Sound, the sense of hearing, and all cavities within the body,—these three originate from Ether. The vital airs, the action of the limbs, and touch, are the attributes of Wind. Form, eyes, and the digestive fire within the stomach, originate from Light (Fire). Taste, tongue, and all the humours

originate from Water. Scent, nose, and the body form the attributes of Earth. Mind, Understanding (Buddhi) and Nature (Prakṛiti),—these three arise from their own previous states.

“As a tortoise extends its limbs and withdraws them once again within itself, even so the Understanding creates the senses, and once again withdraws them into itself.

“The Consciousness of Ego, which arises about what is above the soles of the feet and below the crown of the head, is mainly due to the action of the Understanding.

“It is the Understanding that is transformed into the five attributes (Sound, Touch, etc.). It is the Understanding that is transformed into the five senses, with the Mind for the sixth. There are five senses in man. The Mind is called the sixth. The Understanding is called the seventh. The Soul is the eighth.

“The eyes and the other senses are only for receiving impressions of form, etc. The Mind exists for doubting. The Understanding determines those doubts. The Soul is said only to see the work of each without mingling with them (XII, ccxlvii).

“The Mind creates innumerable ideas. The Understanding differentiates between things and ascertains their true nature. The Heart discriminates which is pleasant and which unpleasant. These are the forces which produce action.

“The objects of the senses are superior to the senses. The Mind is superior to the objects. The

Understanding is superior to the Mind. The Soul is superior to the Understanding.

“Ordinarily the Understanding is the man’s Soul. When the Understanding, by itself, forms ideas (of objects) within itself, it is called the Mind.

“When it (Understanding) hears, it becomes the organ of hearing. When it touches it becomes the organ of touch. When it sees, it becomes the organ of vision ; when it tastes, it becomes the organ of taste ; and when it smells, it becomes the organ of smell. These modifications of the Understanding are called the senses. The invisible Soul is placed over them as their presiding chief. Living in the body, the Understanding exists in the three states (of Gunas). When the Understanding desires for anything, it is called by the name of Mind. The senses, again, should all be considered as contained within the Understanding.

“All the three Gunas attach to the Mind, Understanding and Consciousness (Ahankara or Egoism). The Gunas cannot apprehend the Soul. The Soul, however, apprehends them all. The Soul is a witness which sees the Gunas and works them up. This is the difference between the Understanding and the Soul. The one creates the Gunas, the other does not (XII, ccxlviii).

“The objects by which we are encircled are all created by the Understanding. Without being connected with them, the Soul stands aloof, lording over them. The Understanding creates all objects

The objects created by the Understanding partake of its own nature.

“The Soul is without beginning and without end. Knowing his Soul properly, a man should move and act, without yielding to anger, without indulging in joy, and always shorn of envy.” (XII, ccxlix.)

### 325. THE NAMES OF MAHADEVA.

Then Bhîshma, at the request of Yudhishthira, recited to him the names of Mahadeva by which Daksha worshipped that Diety.

Daksha said,—

“I bow to you, O lord of all the gods! You are everywhere in the universe. You are the receptacle of the Ocean. The worshippers of the Sun worship you in adoring the Sun. In your body I see Soma, Agni, the king of Waters, Vishnu, Brahman, and all. You are cause, effect, and action, the creation and destruction of the universe. You are the Sun; you have gold in your stomach; you are the lord of all the gold in the world. You are identified with the form of Nandi, and you are Righteousness itself. You are the form of Yoga; you are the maker of the universe; you are the form of Sacrifice; you are the form of the rivers and the sea. You are the giver and lord of Food; your locks of hair carry the currents of the Ganga; you are the promulgator of Sankhya and Yoga. You are the husband of Ambika; you are manifest and unmanifest; you are Desire, and the giver and killer of all Desire; you are the giver and destroyer of all things. You have the efful-

gence of a thousand Suns ; you are the lord of the four orders of living creatures, the viviparous, the oviparous, the vegetables and the filth-born. You are the creator as well as destroyer of the mobile and immobile universe; you are the root of the Mind, the refuge on which the elements rest. You are Time, you are Penance, you are Desire, you are Victory. You are rivers, you are Ocean, you are the origin of all objects and acts. You are Indra, you are Agni, you are Brahma ; you are Gunas, you are Chit, and you are invested with *Maya*. You are the creator of all, the Soul of all, and you are the Lord of the universe. You are male, you are female, you are neuter. You are the Ocean ; you are the Soul of Waters ; you are master and creator of all." (XII, cclxxxv.)

### 326. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SANKHYA AND YOGA.

Thereafter Bhīṣma explained to Yudhiṣṭhira the difference between the Sāṅkhya and Yoga systems of thought. "Wise men, devoted to Yoga," said he, "point out that one who does not believe in the existence of God, cannot acquire liberation. Believers in the Sāṅkhya, on the other hand, forward good reason to show that a person, by acquiring true knowledge of all objects, becomes liberated after death. The evidences of Yoga are addressed to the direct perception of the senses ; those of the Sāṅkhya are based on the Scriptures ; and in both systems purity and mercy are equally recommended (XII, ccci).

"The principles of the Sāṅkhya have been

laid down by the great and powerful Kapila.

“The Srutis say that the Sankhya system of philosophy is the form of that Formless one.” (XII, cccii.)

### 327. THE DISCOURSE OF VASISHTHA.

Bhishma then narrated the discourse of Vasishtha, who said, “The eldest being is called Hiran-yagarbha. This holy one has been called the Understanding. In the Yoga Scriptures he is called the Great and the unborn. In the Sankhya system he is considered as having Infinity for his Soul, and as constituting the Soul of the universe. The Manifest is created from the Unmanifest.

“Undergoing changes, he (Hiranyagarbha) creates Consciousness, from which arise the elements, with their properties of Sound, Touch, Form, Taste, and Smell. This aggregate of ten arose at the same time. Then the five senses of knowledge, and five of action, together with the Mind, arose simultaneously. These form the twenty-four topics which exist in the forms of all living creatures. Above the twenty-four topics is the twenty-fifth, called Vishnu. That Vishnu, on account of the absence of all Qualities (Gunas), is not a topic.

The twenty-fourth, which is Nature (Prakriti), is said to lord over all this. The twenty-fifth, which is Vishnu, is formless, and so cannot be said to lord over the universe.” (XII, ccciii.)

“The following question,” continued Bhishma, “was asked by king Janaka from Vasishtha :



“It has been said that the relation between the male and the female is like that which exists between the Indestructible and the Destructible. Without a male a female can never conceive. Without a female a male also can never create a form. If Nature (*Prakṛiti*) and Soul be always united together in this way,—each opposing and each depending on the other’s qualities,—I see that Liberation cannot exist.”

To this *Vasishṭha* replied,—

“O king, the subject of Liberation has been explained by the great ones conversant with the *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* systems of philosophy. That which the *Yogins* behold is exactly what the *Sāṅkhyas* strive after to attain. He who sees the *Sāṅkhya* and the *Yoga* systems to be one and the same, is said to be gifted with intelligence. Objects originate from objects; the senses from the senses. When the Supreme Being is without senses, without seed, without matter, without body, he must be divested of all qualities. Hence, how can he have qualities of any kind? The qualities arise from Nature (*Prakṛiti*) and disappear in Nature (*Prakṛiti*).

“The individual Soul and the universe are said both to partake of Nature (*Prakṛiti*), characterized by the three qualities of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. The Supreme Soul is different from both the individual Soul and the universe.

“Without beginning and without end, the individual Soul on account of its oneness with the body and other qualities, comes to be taken as invested with the qualities (*Guṇas*.) When it conquers all

qualities born of Prakṛiti, which it assumes under a mistake, then only does it see the Supreme.

“An intelligent man considers the unity of the individual Soul with the Supreme Soul as consistent with the Scriptures and as perfectly correct ; while the man shorn of intelligence considers the two as different from each other. When one understands the twenty-five topics of inquiry, he understands that the oneness of the Soul is consistent with the Scriptures, and its multiplicity is opposed to them. That which is above the topics, is beyond that number (twenty-five), and is the twenty-sixth (XII, cccvi).

“When there is a complete indentification between the Knower, the Known, and Knowledge, then is the Yogin said to see the Supreme Self. This much have I told you about the science of Yoga. I shall now describe to you the Sankhya system of philosophy.

“The Sankhyas, whose system is built on Nature (Prakṛiti), say that Nature, which is unmanifest, is the foremost. From Nature is produced Mahat or the principle of Greatness. From Mahat originates Consciousness (Ahankāra or Egoism), and from Consciousness the five subtle essences of Sound, Touch, Form, Taste, and Scent. All these are called by the name of Nature (Prakṛiti). The changes of these eight are sixteen in number. They are the five gross essences,—Ether, Air, Fire, Water, and Earth,—and the ten senses of knowledge and action, and the Mind. These twenty-four topics include the whole range of the Sankhya.

“What is produced becomes merged in the producing cause. Created by the Supreme Soul, one after another, these principles are destroyed in the reverse order. This is the manner in which the creation and destruction of Nature (Prakṛiti) takes place. The Supreme Being is all that remains when universal destruction takes place; and it is He who assumes various forms when creation begins.

“It is Nature (Prakṛiti) that causes the over-presiding Soul to assume diversity and revert back to unity. Nature itself has the same marks; for when destruction comes, it reverts into unity, and when creation takes place, it assumes diversity of form.

“The Soul makes Prakṛiti,— which contains the principles of production,— to assume different forms. Prakṛiti is called Kshetra (Field). Above the twenty-four topics is the Soul, which presides over Prakṛiti or Kshetra. Hence the Soul is called the presider, or Kshetrajña (Knower of the Field). Kshetra is something quite different from Kshetrajña. Kshetra is unmanifest; the Soul, which is above the twenty-four topics, is called the Knower.

“The Sankhyas call Nature (Prakṛiti) the cause of the universe; and, merging the grosser principles into Intelligence (Buddhi), behold the Supreme Soul.

“The individual Soul is in reality that very Soul which is above Nature (Prakṛiti) and the four and twenty topics. When he succeeds in knowing the Supreme Soul, by dissociating himself from Nature

(Prakṛiti), he then becomes at one with the Supreme Soul (XII, cccvii).

“Both Prakṛiti and the individual Soul are without beginning and without end. Both of them are considered as supreme. And because the principles, beginning with Mahat (Greatness or Buddhi), are produced by Puruṣha as well, and because Puruṣha and Prakṛiti depend upon each other, therefore is the Puruṣha too, the twenty-fifth, called Kṣhetra.

“But when the Soul shakes off Nature (Prakṛiti) and begins to realize that he is different from her, he comes to be regarded as pure and stainless. When the individual Soul ceases to exist in a state of union with Prakṛiti, then does he become at one with Brahma. When, however, he exists united with Prakṛiti, he seems to be different from Brahma.

“In the Sāṅkhya system no topic or principle above the twenty-fifth is admitted. In the Yoga philosophy it is said that Brahma, the essence of knowledge, without a second, becomes the individual Soul. In the Yoga scriptures, therefore, both Brahma and the individual Soul are spoken of (XII, cccviii).

“The twenty-fifth principle (individual Soul) can comprehend the Unmanifest (Prakṛiti). The twenty-sixth (Supreme Soul) can know both the individual Soul and Prakṛiti, numbering twenty-fifth and twenty-fourth respectively.

“When the individual Soul succeeds in understanding Prakṛiti, he is said to be restored to his

true nature and attains to that pure Knowledge which is called the twenty-sixth. When he knows Prakriti, which is subject to the action of the three Gunas, he becomes shorn of Gunas himself, and so becomes one with the Supreme." (XII, cccix).

### 328. NARADA'S HYMN TO NARAYANA.

Thereafter Bhishma spoke to Yudhishthira of the adoration of Narada to Narayana, who worshipped that Lord of the universe as God of all gods, divested of all attributes, witness of the world, and the Soul of the universe. "Salutations to you," he said, "who are infinite, the Supreme Purusha, and both manifest and unmanifest. You are Sun, you are Prana, you are the king of the Waters. You are Desire, you are Sacrifice, you live in every heart. You float on the waters, you lie on the lotus, you are the origin of the universe. You are Sun, you are Moon; you are Mind, you are Maya; you are Om, you are Cause; you are Creator, you are Death; and you are of the form of liberation for all." (XII, cccxxxix.)

### 329. THE VISION OF NARADA.

Then Narayana appeared to Narada, and described to him the greatness of Vasudeva (Krishna). "Endued with great power," said he, "Vasudeva is the Soul of all creatures. Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether are the primal elements; and, mingling together, they form the body. Vasudeva enters their combination, and his entrance into them is called his birth. Without the combination of the five elements, no body can ever be

formed. Without, again, the entrance of the individual Soul into the body, the Mind, living within it, cannot cause it to move and act. He that enters the body is called the individual. He is also known by other names,—Sesha and Sankarshana.

“He that takes his rise from that Sankarshana is the Mind of all creatures, and is called by the name of Pradyumna. From him originates he who is the Creator, and who is both effect and cause; he is called Aniruddha.

“It is from me (*Narayana*) that the entire mobile and immobile universe originates. Without actions and above the *Gunas*, I am yet the actor,—the effect and the cause. I pervade all things. I am the inner Soul of all creatures.

“See within me the eleven Rudras, the twelve Adityas, the eight Vasus, and *Nasatya* and *Dasra*, the two physicians. See the goddess *Sarasvati*; see all the oceans, rivers, and the lakes; and see the three *Gunas* too.” (XII, cccxl.)

### 330. BRAHMAN'S HYMN TO NARAYANA.

Bhishma then narrated the following hymn of the Grandfather Brahman addressed to *Narayana*. “I bow to you.” said he, “who are the creator of both the Manifest and the Unmanifest. You are self-create, without origin, and the inner self of all.” (XII, cccxlviii.)

“The Supreme Being,” said Brahman, “is the

cause of all this, as Soul. He is again the cause of everything, as Prakṛiti. He is the agent or doer of deeds. He is the cause of everything in the universe ; and he is the various kinds of power which act in the universe. Whatever acts are performed, whatever gifts are made, whatever penances are done, have Vishnu for their refuge.” (XII, cccxlviii.)

## XIII. ANUSASANA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXV

#### THE SCIENCE OF THE SOUL

##### 331. THE WORSHIP OF MAHADEVA.

FINDING Yudhishthira still heavy at heart, Krishna, at the request of Bhishma, described to him (Yudhishthira) the universal form of Mahadeva, the supreme creator of the universe, who is the Soul of all creatures and dwells in the heart of all; who is made up of *Maya*; who is the form of all actions in the universe; who is *Hiranyagarbha*, without beginning or end; who is *Prana*; who is endued with *Gunas* and shorn of them; who is every deed and every omission, every virtue and every sin; who shows in his form the marks of both the sexes as the one cause of the creation of the universe; and half of whose body is made up of half of that of his consort, *Uma* or *Parvati* (XIII, xiv).

Thereupon Krishna narrated to them how Upamanyu worshipped Mahadeva. "You are the Soul of all," said Upamanyu, "the Creator of all things. You are that *Pravritti* whence all actions originate, and you live in the heart of every creature. You are the Lord of all, the Soul of all, and you have the universe for your form. You are self-create; you are the divine architect; you are supreme *Brahma*, without beginning or end. You are *Hiranyagarbha*; you are *Soma*; you are *Sun*,



you are Moon, you are planets; you are Kāma (Desire); you are Sacrifice; you are action. You are Vishnu, you are Indra, you are Agni, you are Ocean, and you are the Tree of the world. You are dark, you are white; you are ever present in your phallic emblem; and you unite the individual Soul with the Supreme. You are the maker of the Field of Action; you reside in that field, and you are the Soul of that field." (XIII,xvii.)

Then Bhishma told Yudhishthira how Narada heard Mahadeva describe the glory of Krishna. "He is superior to the Grandfather (Brahma) himself," said he. "He is the eternal Purusha. He is the Creator of all, the Supreme Soul, who causes all things to act. He has Yoga for his Maya; he is infinite, he is all." (XIII, cxlvi.)

### 332. BHISHMA ADORES KRISHNA.

Then Bhishma himself adored Krishna, and said, "He is the Lord of the Past, Present, and the Future; the Creator, preserver, and destroyer of all. He is self-create, the Soul of all, the Witness, origin, and refuge of things. Above all Gunas, he yet is born at will, and causes all creatures to live and act. He is the divine Architect; the effect and cause; the material cause of the universe; and at one with all the deeds. He has waters for his home; he is the receptacle of all waters in the world; and he overwhelms the universe with his Maya. He is free from desire, and yet he is the father of Kāma (Desire), and desires to create the world. He is manifest, he is unmanifest; he is infinite, he is cipher; he is

Jiva, and he is the Supreme Soul. The Moon is from his Mind; he has the effulgence of the Sun; and he takes his birth and lives in the form of Sacrifice. He is the accomplisher of all deeds the enjoyer of all objects, and the creator of all things. He is Soul, he is Chit, and he dwells in the Heart. He has a number of incarnations,—the Fish, Tortoise, and the Boar; the Dwarf and the two Ramas;—and he is the performer of all functions in the universe. He is Vyasa, he is Varuna, the son of Varuna, and the brother of Indra. He is of tawny colour; he is of golden hue; he is armed with the discus; he has the mystic mark (Srivatsa) on his breast; and he is the form of the universe. (XIII, cxlix.)

“It is *Krishna* who is the act done, the act to be done, and the act that is being done. This world represents his car, and it is he who yokes the car for setting it in motion. He is *Vishnu*, he is *Vasudeva*; and when he becomes the individual Soul, he is called *Sankarshana*. Next, he changes himself into *Pradyumna*, and then into *Aniruddha*. It is he who creates the universe. Whatever exists, whatever will come into being, is *Kesava* all.” (XIII, clviii.)

Then, addressing *Krishna*, he said, “Thou art *Vasudeva*, thou art *Purusha*, thou art the creator of the universe. Do thou, O lotus-eyed, save me. Do thou grant me permission to depart.”

Then said *Krishna*, “I give you leave, O *Bhishma*, to attain to the status of *Vasus*. Death depends on your pleasure like a slave” (XIII, clxvii.)

## 333. THE DEATH OF BHISHMA.

Having said this, Bhishma remained silent for some time. Then, as his time had come to depart, the vital air, unable to escape through any other outlet, passed through the crown of his head, and proceeded to heaven.

Then the *Pandavas* and *Kauravas* made a great funeral pyre, and with many sacrifices, hymns and prayers, performed his last rites, and made oblations of water to the departed one (XIII, clxviii).

## XIV. ASVAMEDHA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXVI

#### THE SACRIFICE OF THE HORSE

##### 334. THE ADVICE OF VYASA.

AFTER the death of Bhīshma, Yudhishthira still felt feeble and sad, and king Dhritarashtra and Krishna comforted him. Then, in order to remove his grief, Vyasa advised him to perform a Horse Sacrifice. But, as his treasury had been depleted, he bade him seek for gold in the Himalayas, left behind by the Brahmanas at the sacrifice of the great Marutta (XIV, i-iii).

##### 335. THE REQUEST OF ARJUNA.

The Pandavas, with Krishna and Arjuna, then entered the beautiful Assembly-Hall at Indraprastha and spent their time pleasantly. Then, as Krishna was desirous of returning to Dvaraka, he sought their permission to depart. Then Arjuna beseeched him to tell him once more the Truth of Life as he had explained to him before the battle of Kurukshetra; and Krishna asked him to listen to the discourse of a Brahmana on the subject (XIV, xv-xvi).

##### 336. ANUGITA.

“The actions, good or bad, done by the individual Soul,” said the Brahmana, “are not subject

to destruction. Upon attainment of body after body, those deeds yield their fruit.

“On account of its subtlety, and also because it is unmanifest, the individual Soul does not become attached to anything even after coming to a body. Therefore, it is called eternal Brahma. That (individual Soul or Brahma) is the seed of all creatures (XIV, xviii).

“Whatever actions exist, are done by men devoted to action. Freedom from action cannot be attained even momentarily in this world.

“The indestructible is above the senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell; and the vital airs,—*Prana*, *Apana*, *Samana*, *Vyana*, and *Udana*, all flow from him.

“The nose, the tongue, the eyes, the skin, the ears, the Mind and the Understanding (*Buddhi*) are the seven tongues of the flame of *Vaisvanara* fire; and these seven are called the womb of all things. From that are produced smell, taste, colour, touch, sound, doubt, and resolution; and this is what is known as the sevenfold creation (XIV, xx).

The ears, the skin, the two eyes, the tongue, the nose, the two feet, the two hands, speech, the genital organs, and the lower duct (organ of excretion),—these are the ten sacrificing priests. Sound, touch, colour, taste, smell, motion, action, speech, the discharge of vital seed and urine, and of excreta,—these are the ten libations.

The points of the compass (*Ether*), Wind, Sun Moon, Fire, Earth, *Vishnu*, *Indra*, *Prajapati* and *Mitra*—these are the ten sacrificial fires.

“The ten senses of knowledge and action are the sacrificing priests. The libations are ten. The objects of the senses are the fuel that is thrown into these ten fires. The Mind is the ladle, and the wealth the good and bad actions of the sacrificer. What remains is the purest, highest knowledge (XIV, xx).

“The restrained motion of the *Prana* air is said to be the motion of the Mind. Hence the Mind depends upon *Prana*.

“The Mind is superior to Speech (Word). Speech is of two kinds, with utterance and without utterance. Speech (Word) lives between *Prana* and *Apana*. When there is deep exhalation (*Apana*), there is no utterance (XIV, xx).

“The nose, the tongue, the eyes, the skin, the ears, the Mind, and the Understanding,—these are the seven sacrificing priests standing distinctly from one another. Each one apprehends its own character. The nose alone apprehends smell; taste is apprehended by the tongue alone; colour by the eye alone; the skin alone apprehends touch; and the ear sound. Doubt is apprehended by the Mind alone, and it is the Understanding alone that apprehends determination (XIV, xxii).

“The nose, tongue, eyes, skin, ears, Mind, and Understanding,—these seven are the causes of qualities (*Gunas*). Smell, taste, colour, touch, sound, the objects of the Mind, and the objects of the Understanding,—these are the seven causes of action. As regards the Soul, it is destitute of qualities or *Gunas* (XIV, xxv).

“There is one Ruler and there is no second beside him. He dwells in the heart. There is nothing separate from him; there is nothing smaller than that and nothing greater than that (XIV,xxvi-xxvii).

“Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas are called the three qualities. They are connected with and depend on one another. Tamas has Night for its essence ; Rajas has activity for its essence ; and Sattva has for its essence light, splendour and faith (XIV, xxxvi).

“The three qualities (*Gunas*) are incapable of being described as completely separate from one another. They exist in a state of union; they follow one another; they travel together and move collectively. Whatever object exists in the world, is possessed of the three qualities. The Unmanifest, consisting of the three qualities (*Gunas*), is said to be Tamas, unborn, womb, eternal, Prakṛiti, Pradhāna, existent and non-existent (XIV, xxxvi-xxxix).

“From the Unmanifest first originated the Great Soul, gifted with great intelligence, and the source of all the qualities. He is called Vishnu, Jishnu, Understanding, the means of acquiring knowledge. That being is stationed in the hearts of all (XIV, xl).

“Mahat, or the principle of Greatness, who was first produced, is called Egoism. That Egoism is said to be the source of all creatures. It is Prajapati. It is the creator of the Mind ; and it creates the three worlds (XIV, xli).

“From Egoism were born the five great elements. They are Ether Air, Fire, Water, and Earth,—

characterized by sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell respectively.

“Prana, Apana, Udana, Samana, and Vyana,—these five vital airs are always closely attached to the Soul.

“Eleven organs have originated from Egoism. They are the ears, skin, the two eyes, tongue, and nose, the two feet, two hands, speech, the organ of generation, and the lower duct, with Mind for the eleventh. Above these is Understanding, the twelfth at the top.

“Ether is the first element. As connected with the Soul, it is called the ear; as connected with objects, it is sound. Wind is the second. As connected with the Soul, it is the skin, and as connected with objects, it is known as objects of touch. The third is said to be Light (Fire). As connected with the Soul, it is known as the eye; as connected with objects, it is colour. The fourth is Water. As connected with the Soul, it is said to be the tongue; and as connected with objects, it is taste. The fifth is Earth. As connected with the Soul, it is said to be the nose; and as connected with objects, it is scent.

“The two feet are connected with the Soul; and, as connected with objects, they are motion. The two hands are connected with the Soul; and, as connected with objects, they are action. Speech is connected with the Soul; and, as connected with the objects, it is what is spoken. As connected with the Soul, the organ of generation is the producer of all beings; as connected with objects, it is the vital seed.



“As connected with the Soul, the Mind moves within the five elements ; as connected with objects, it is the mental operation, and its presiding deity is the Moon. As connected with the Soul, Egoism is the cause of the entire course of worldly life ; and, as connected with objects, it is consciousness of self.

“Fourfold is the birth of beings, born of wombs, of eggs, some as trees, and some as born of germs. Those who burst through the earth, are said to be germ-born beings (XIV, xlii).

“Ether has sound for its characteristic ; Wind touch ; Fire colour ; Water taste ; and Earth smell. Mind has thought for its characteristic ; and thought has been said to be characteristic of the Understanding too. Things thought of by the Mind are determined with accuracy by the Understanding. The upholder of Consciousness, living in the Heart, is for apprehending the Mind. The Understanding is apprehended in the form of determination or certitude, and Mahat in that of knowledge. The unperceived (Prakṛiti) lives in the symbol called Kshetra (Field). The Purusha knows it ; therefore he is called Kshetrajna [Knower of the Field] (XIV, xliii).

“Some hold that Purusha and Prakṛiti are one ; some hold that they are different. Both views are incorrect. They are both distinct and associated together at the same time (XIV, xlvi).

“Purusha is the subject, Prakṛiti the object. Prakṛiti is unintelligent, and knows nothing ; the Soul knows. He is the enjoyer. Prakṛiti is

his object of enjoyment. Prakṛiti is made up of pairs of opposites; the Soul is free from opposites, devoid of parts, devoid of qualities. He enjoys Prakṛiti like a lotus leaf on water.

“ Prakṛiti is the property of Puruṣa. The relation between them is as between matter and its maker (XIV, xlix-l).

“ Pradhāna (Prakṛiti) is unmanifest. A development of the unmanifest is Mahat. A development of Pradhāna, when it has become Mahat, is Egoism. From Egoism emanate the great elements.

“ Ether is the highest of the elements. Egoism is above it. Above Egoism is Understanding (Buddhi). Above the Understanding is the individual Soul. Above the individual Soul is the Unmanifest (Prakṛiti). Above the Unmanifest is the Supreme Puruṣa.” (XIV, l.)

Then said Krishna, “If you have any love for me, O perpetuator of the Kuru race, do you always act, O you of excellent vows.” (XIV, li.)

After this Krishna took leave of the *Pandavas* and departed for *Dvaraka*. Arriving there, he described to his people the battle of Kurukshetra and all that had happened there (XIV, lii-lx).

### 337. THE HORSE SACRIFICE.

In the meanwhile Yudhishthira, as advised by Vyasa, made preparations for the Horse-Sacrifice. As, however, the treasury was empty, the *Pandava* brothers went to the Himalayas in search of the wealth of Marutta. Placing Vyasa in front of them, they came to the proper place; and, excavating the ground, took out all that they required and

returned to their capital. *Krishna* too came to *Hastinapura* to take part in the Sacrifice (XIV, lxiii-lxvi).

### 338. THE BIRTH OF *PARIKSHIT*.

Then, because the weapon discharged by *Asvatthaman* had pierced the womb of *Uttara*, she gave birth to a still-born child. Then *Uttara*, *Subadhra*, *Kuntî* and others began to weep, and begged *Krishna* to bring the child to life even as he had promised. Thereupon *Madhava* (*Krishna*) bade that the child should live; and, even as he spoke, the child began to move as one alive. He was *Parikshit*, the successor of the *Pandavas* (XIV, lxvi-lxx).

### 339. THE INITIATION OF *YUDHISHTHIRA*.

Then preparations for the Sacrifice commenced, and *Yudhishthira* asked *Krishna* to initiate it. But *Krishna* asked him to do it himself, promising that he (*Krishna*) would accomplish everything for them. Then he promised to initiate *Yudhishthira* on the day of the full Moon in the month of *Chaitra* (XIV, lxxi-lxxii).

### 340. THE HORSE SET FREE.

In the meanwhile all the articles necessary for the Sacrifice were procured, and a Horse was loosened that day to wander over the earth according to the ordinances of the Scriptures; and *Arjuna*, at the bidding of *Vyasa*, was appointed to follow the animal as its protector, to fight with any one who should dare to challenge the universal sovereignty of *Yudhishthira* (XIV, lxxii).

## 341. ARJUNA AND BABHRUVAHANA.

Arjuna followed the Horse, and fought many battles with those who ventured to stop the animal, and required all the princes he had defeated to assemble at the Sacrifice on the appointed day. At last he came to Manipura, where ruled his own son, Babhruvahana, born of Chitrangada, and Arjuna challenged him to fight with him. Thereupon the son was compelled to fight with his own father, and in the combat that took place Arjuna was thrown down unconscious and taken for dead. But he was revived by Ulupi, his serpent-wife, who took out a gem, and bade Babhruvahana place it on the breast of his father, when Arjuna came to life once more. All this had happened to Arjuna because of the curse of the Vasus for having killed Bhishma (XIV, lxxiii-lxxxi).

The Horse, followed by Arjuna, having wandered over the earth bounded by the sea, returned to Hastinapura. All the kings and princes, defeated by Arjuna, had assembled there, and all preparations for the Sacrifice were made. There also had assembled Rishis, Brahmanas, sages, Gandharvas and others (XIV, lxxxii-lxxxviii).

## 342. THE SACRIFICE OF THE HORSE.

When Arjuna returned with the Horse, the priests began the Sacrifice. They cut the Horse into pieces according to the directions of the Scriptures, and caused Draupadi to sit near the divided animal. They took out the marrow of the Horse

and cooked it; and Yudhishthira and his brothers smelt its smoke. The remaining limbs of the Horse were then poured into the fire by the sixteen sacrificial priests of great wisdom; and at the end of the Sacrifice Yudhishthira made great offerings to the *Brahmanas* (XIV, lxxxix).

## XV. ASRAMAVASIKA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXVII

#### THE DEATH OF DHRITARASHTRA

##### 343. THE REIGN OF PANDAVAS AND DHRITARASHTRA.

HAVING regained their kingdom, the *Pandavas*, placing *Dhritarashtra* at their head, ruled the earth; and the son of *Ambika* (*Dhritarashtra*) passed his time happily, honoured by all. *Gandhari* too lived cheerfully and at peace (XV, i-ii).

##### 344. DHRITARASHTRA RETIRES.

In this way fifteen years passed away, and then *Dhritarashtra* desired to retire from the kingdom. He had been hurt by some words of *Bhima*, of which no one knew, and so he sought *Yudhishthira*'s permission to retire into the forest. Then, as *Vyasa* also pressed *Yudhishthira* to let the old king depart, he agreed; and *Dhritarashtra*, followed by *Gandhari*, *Vidura*, and *Sanjaya*, made preparations to leave for the forest. Then, as *Kunti* also had resolved to accompany them, and could not be persuaded to stay, she too made ready to leave (XV, iii-xv).

##### 345. KUNTI'S ADVICE.

*Dhritarashtra* blessed *Yudhishthira* and his brothers, and *Kunti* advised him never to neglect *Sahadeva*; and then they, clad in deer-skins and barks, departed for the forest (XV, xvi).

## 346. THE HERMITAGE OF VYASA.

They stayed for a time on the banks of the Ganges, and from there proceeded to Kurukshetra. Then, at the hermitage of Vyasa, the king received his initiation into the forest mode of life (XV, xviii-xix).

## 347. THE PANDAVAS' VISIT.

Upon the retirement of Dhritarashtra, the Pandavas became dispirited, and resolved to see him once more. So they came to Kurukshetra, where he lived with Gandhari, Kunti, Vidura and Sanjaya in the company of Rishis and sages. He welcomed them and offered gifts of water, roots and fruits to Yudhishthira; and so they lived together for some time (XV, xxi-xxiii).

## 348. THE DEATH OF VIDURA.

Then, as Yudhishthira greeted Vidura, he found him engaged in Yoga meditation. Vidura looked steadily at the king (Yudhishthira) and (by his power) entered his body, limb by limb, and then passed away to the other world (XV, xxvi).

## 349. A VISION OF THE DEAD.

Then the great ascetic Vyasa asked them all to repair to the banks of the Bhagirathi (Ganges), and he summoned all the warriors who had been slain on the battlefield, and they all rose from the waters of the Ganga. Then Vyasa blessed Dhritarashtra with celestial vision, and he and Gandhari beheld all their children and all those who had been slain. Then the living met the dead once more and felt happy, and Dhritarashtra, who had never seen his sons before, saw that they

were very like his own self. Seeing his sons, he renewed his grief and returned to the hermitage. He then bade Yudhishthira and his brothers return to their kingdom, and engaged himself in penance (XV, xxxii-xxxvi).

### 350. THE DEATH OF DHRITARASHTRA AND OTHERS.

After two years had passed from the date of the return of the *Pandavas* (three after the departure of *Dhritarashtra* to the forest), *Narada* came to *Yudhishthira*, and informed him that *Dhritarashtra* had caused a sacrificial fire to be lighted, from the remnants of which the forest caught fire, and he, *Gandhari*, and *Kunti* were all reduced to ashes. *Sanjaya* alone escaped (XV, xxxvii).

Hearing this, the *Pandavas* were filled with grief. Then, headed by *Yuyutsu*, they went to the river side and offered oblations of water to the great king and to *Gandhari* and *Pritha* (XV, xxxix).



## XVI. MAUSALA PARVA.

### CHAPTER XXVIII

#### THE PASSING OF KRISHNA.

##### 351. AFTER THIRTY-SIX YEARS.

WHEN the thirty-sixth year after the Battle of Kurukshetra had arrived, Yudhishthira saw many unusual portents on earth and in the sky; and soon after he heard of the wholesale destruction of the *Vrishnis*, and the passing away of *Balarama* and *Vasudeva*. All this happened as follows :—(XVI, i).

##### 352. THE DISGUISE OF SAMBA: THE IRON BOLT.

One day the *Vrishni* heroes saw *Visvamitra*, *Kanva*, *Narada* and other *Rishis* arrived at *Dvaraka*; and causing *Samba*, a son of *Vasudeva*, to be disguised as a woman, brought him to them, saying, "This one is the wife of *Babhrū*, who is desirous of getting a son. Ye, *Rishis*, do you know for certain, what this one will produce?" They replied, "This heir of *Vasudeva* will produce a dreadful iron bolt for the destruction of the *Vrishnis* and the *Andhakas*. Through that iron bolt you will become the exterminators of your family, with the exception of *Rama* and *Janardana*. That blessed hero, armed with the plough (*Balarama*), will enter the Ocean, renouncing his body; while a hunter of the name of *Jara* will pierce

the great *Krishna* lying on the ground." (XVI, i.)

### 353. THE IRON BOLT : THE COMMAND OF KRISHNA.

The next day *Samba* actually produced an iron bolt ; and king *Ugrasena*, to whom the fact was duly reported, caused it to be reduced to fine powder, and cast into the sea. Then, at the command of *Janardana* and *Rama*, it was announced that no one should manufacture wines and intoxicating liquors on pain of death (XVI, i).

### 354. THE PILGRIMAGE.

But the hour of the destruction of the *Vrishnis* had arrived and, knowing that it was so, and remembering *Gandhari's* curse, *Krishna* commanded the *Vrishnis* to make a pilgrimage to the sacred waters, and so they did. They went with their wives and took up their abode on the sea coast (XVI, ii).

### 355. THE DRUNKEN REVELRY.

There at *Prabhāsa* the *Vrishni* heroes, mixing wine with the food that had been prepared for the *Brahmanas*, gave it to monkeys and apes, and *Rama* and others began to revel with drink (XVI, iii).

### 356. THE DESTRUCTION OF VRISHNIS AND ANDHAKAS.

Then *Yuyudhana*, intoxicated with wine, insulted *Kritavarman* in the open assembly ; and, in the quarrel that followed, *Satyaki* rushed at *Kritavarman*, and cut off his head in the very presence of *Krishna*. Then the *Bhojas* and *Andhakas* rushed upon *Satyaki*, and the son of *Krishna*

went to rescue him. But both Satyaki and the son of Krishna were killed. At this Krishna in anger took up a handful of Eraka grass which grew there, and it became a terrible bolt of iron gifted with the energy of the thunderbolt; and with it he destroyed all who came before him. Then they all struck one another in a dreadful fight, and whoever took up in anger a blade of the Eraka grass, that in his hand was converted into an iron thunderbolt; and, fighting with that, they destroyed one another (XVI, iii).

### 357. THE DEATH OF BALARAMA.

Seeing the Vrishnis and Andhakas slain, Krishna bade Daruka, his charioteer, go and bring Arjuna, and he went himself in search of his brother Rama. He saw him sitting in a solitary place, rapt in Yoga meditation; and from his mouth issued forth a powerful Snake, of white colour and a thousand heads, and it proceeded along the way to the Ocean. With that Balarama passed away from this world (XVI, iv).

### 358. THE DEATH OF KRISHNA.

Seeing this, Vasudeva (Krishna), knowing that his own hour had come, sat down on the naked earth. Knowing the truth of every thing, and though he was the Supreme Deity, he yet wished to die for removing all doubts and establishing a certainty of results, and for upholding the three worlds. He sat down in high Yoga, when a fierce hunter, named Jara, came there; and, mistaking him for a deer, pierced him with an arrow at the heel; and the high-souled one, knowing that

his time had come, ascended to his own inconceivable regions above (XVI, iv).

### THE ARRIVAL OF ARJUNA.

Meanwhile Daruka arrived at Hastinapura, and described to the sons of *Pandū* all that had taken place. Then Arjuna started for Dvaraka and, arriving there, saw the city looking like a woman reft of her husband ; and at his sight the sixteen thousand ladies who had been wedded to Vasudeva, uttered a loud cry of woe (XVI, v).

### 360. THE MESSAGE OF KRISHNA.

Arjuna then went to meet Vasudeva (father of *Krishna*), and he gave him the message of *Krishna* who had said, " I am Arjuna, and Arjuna is myself. Do that which Arjuna says. This city of Dvaraka, after Arjuna's departure, will speedily be swallowed up by the sea " (XVI, vi).

### 361. THE DEATH OF VASUDEVA.

Arjuna passed the night in the palace of *Krishna*, and resolved to take the remnants of the *Vrishnis* and Andhakas with himself, and instal Vajra as their king at Indraprastha. When, however, the morning dawned, a sound of wailing was heard, and Arjuna heard that Vasudeva had passed away (XVI, vii).

### 362. THE SUBMERSION OF DVARAKA.

After the last rites of Vasudeva were performed, the bodies of *Rāma* and *Krishna* were also cremated ; and on the seventh day, taking with him the wives of the *Vrishnis* and Andhakas,

Arjuna departed for the city of Hastinapura. After all had started, the Ocean rose and flooded and swallowed up the city of Dvaraka, and all were filled with wonder at the sight (XVI, vii).

### 363. THE ATTACK OF ROBBERS.

Dhananjaya, accompanied by the *Vrishni* women arrived at the country of the five rivers; and there he was attacked by a band of robbers, *Abhīras*, who, finding him alone and accompanied by women, children and old men, fell upon him. Arjuna felt some difficulty in stringing his celestial bow; his celestial weapons did not come to his mind; and he lost the might of his arm. When he struck the robbers with arrows shot off *Gandiva*, the darts, which before were inexhaustible, were soon exhausted; and, before the eyes of all, many foremost of the ladies were dragged away, while others went away with the robbers of their own accord. Dhananjaya considered it all as a work of Destiny; and, taking with him the residue of *Vrishni* women, children, and old men, reached Kurukshetra. He established them at different places; and then, with tears in his eyes entered the hermitage of Vyasa (XVI, vii).

### 364. THE ADVICE OF VYASA.

He described what had happened to that sage, saying, "Krishna and Rama have ascended to heaven, and five hundred thousand mighty-armed warriors have been slain; and, in my very sight, thousands of *Vrishni* ladies have been carried away by the *Abhīras* of the country of the five waters." But Vyasa comforted him, assuring him that all

## 300 THE MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA

that had been ordained had come to pass. He informed him that his own great work in life had come to an end, and the time had arrived when he and his brothers must pass. Then Arjuna returned to the city of Hastinapura and informed Yudhishthira of all that had taken place (XVI, viii).

## XVII. MAHAPRASTHANA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXIX

#### THE PASSING OF THE PANDAVAS

##### 365. THE SUCCESSORS OF THE PANDAVAS.

AFTER the destruction of the *Vrishnis*, Yudhishthira resolved to depart from this world. He made over a part of the kingdom to Yuyutsu, the son of Dhritarashtra by his Vaisya wife; installed Parikshit on the throne, and made Vajra, a survivor of the Yadus a king. Parikshit was to rule at Hastinapura, and Vajra at Indraprastha; and he installed Kripa as the preceptor of Parikshit (XVII, i.)

##### 366. THE LAST JOURNEY.

Then he and all his brothers as well as Draupadi, clad themselves in barks of trees and, followed by a Dog, turned their face to the east and started on their journey. Yudhishthira proceeded first; he was followed by Bhima; he by Arjuna; while the two twins came after them in order of their birth. Behind them all came Draupadi, that foremost of women; and as they started, a Dog followed them. They proceeded on, and reached the sea of red waters. There the god of Fire met them and, at his bidding, Arjuna threw back into the Ocean that foremost of bows, *Gandiva*, which had been procured by Agni from Varuna for his use. They then turned to the south, then south-

west, and then west, and saw the city of Dvaraka covered by the sea. Then, turning to the north, those foremost ones went on (XVII, i).

### 367. THE DEATH OF THE PANDAVAS.

Proceeding to the north, they saw Himavat (Himalayas) and, crossing it, beheld a vast desert of sand; and then saw the powerful mountain Meru. As they were proceeding quickly, rapt in Yoga, Draupadi dropped down on the earth; then Sahadeva, Nakula, Arjuna and Bhīma fell down dead on the earth in turn. Yudhishthira alone, followed by the Dog, went on (XVII, ii).

### 368. YUDHISHTHIRA AND HIS DOG.

Then Indra came down in his car, and bade him ascend it with him. Yudhishthira asked him to take his brothers, and he replied that they had all ascended to Heaven before him. Then Yudhishthira insisted that the Dog who had followed him, should accompany him; and when Indra replied that there was no place for dogs in heaven, the king refused to accompany Indra to heaven unless his Dog went with him too. Thereupon, seeing his devotion to the animal, the Dog transformed itself into Dharma, the deity of Virtue, and they all ascended to Heaven (XVII, iii).



## XVIII. SVARGAROHANIKA PARVA

### CHAPTER XXX

#### THE ASCENT TO HEAVEN

##### 369. THE ILLUSION OF HELL.

ARRIVED in heaven, Yudhishthira saw Duryodhana and his brothers, but not his own brothers or Draupadī. He, therefore, desired to be taken where they were; and, at the command of the deities, a celestial messenger took him along a dark and difficult path, trodden by men of sinful deeds, and he saw the tortures inflicted upon them. Then suddenly he heard a piteous cry; and one by one his brothers, Draupadī and others called to him and beseeched him to stay with them for they were unhappy and his presence comforted them (XVIII, i-ii).

##### 370. THE ABODE OF HAPPY ONES.

Yudhishthira was filled with anger at the sight of his brothers in Hell and, censuring the celestials, bade the messenger return to the gods, and resolved to stay with them himself. Thereupon the celestials, headed by Indra and accompanied by Dharma, appeared, and asked them all to return to the abode of the happy ones. "Hell, O son," said Indra, "must be seen by every king, for there is enough of good and evil in the world.

You had deceived Drona about his son. You have, therefore, been shown Hell by an act of deception. Like yourself, Bhīma, Arjuna, the twins, and Draupadī have all been shown Naraka (Hell) by an act of deception." (XVIII, iii.)

### 371. THE VISION OF HEAVEN.

Yudhishthira then returned to the abode of the celestials, and there saw Ganga who spreads her currents over the three worlds. There also he saw Govinda (Krishna) in his Brahma-form, with the heroic Arjuna worshipping him, and they welcomed him. He saw Karna, and Bhīma, and Nakula and Sahadeva. He saw the sons of Draupadī as five Gandharvas, and Dhritarashtra as king of Gandharvas. The son of Subhadra (Abhimanyu) was staying with Soma, and Bhishma with the Vasus. Pandu was united with Kuntī and Madri, and Draupadī was as Sri, the goddess of plenty. Drona had entered into Vrihaspati; Vidura and Yudhishthira into Dharma; the sons of Dhritarashtra, all Rakshasas, were sanctified by death, and acquired the regions of the celestials; Ghatotkacha had become a Yaksha; and each one had attained to his own nature after death. Vasudeva was a part of the eternal Narayana, and his sixteen thousand wives plunged into Sarasvatī; and were transformed into Apsaras (XVIII iv-v).

### 372. THE END.

Thus ends the story of the Mahabharata.  
That which is in this is elsewhere. That which

does not occur here occurs nowhere else. This history is known by the name of *Jaya*. It should be heard by every one desirous of Liberation; and, listening to it, men and women would acquire the status of *Vishnu* (XVIII, v-vi).

END OF PART I.



PART II.

THE ESSENCE OF THE EPIC.



## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM OF THE MAHABHARATA

It is impossible to conceive of a more difficult, and yet a more fascinating, problem than that presented by the Mahabharata,—generally believed to be an Epic or “ history ” of the Bharata race. The field it covers is so varied and vast, and the subjects it treats of so wide and diverse, that the mind is easily dazed by the splendour, mystery, and confusion of it all. History, and and Philosophy, Sociology and Politics, Geography, Physiology, and Medicine, Astronomy, Science, and Religion,—there is nothing that it does not claim to examine;—and all this is woven into a wonderful drama of love and war, life and death—with mighty heroes, lovely maidens, and great sages to fill each scene. And then that Krishna,—half man, half God,—yet wholly elusive, inexplicable, infinite !

The whole idea is baffling to a degree. The Mahabharata claims to be an essence of all the Sacred Books of the Hindus,—from the Vedas downwards, and it is said to be the fifth Veda itself,—the source of all knowledge and wisdom, dealing with all that has been or can be known. “ That which is in this, is elsewhere : that which does not occur here, occurs nowhere

else !” Thus it is said. And yet how far does the actual Story bear out this claim ? Beyond the Celestial Song of the *Bhagavad Gita* repeated in the *Anugita*, and the discourses of Bhishma and others in the *Santi* and *Anusasana Parvas*, and a few scattered references to philosophy, morality and religion, there is little in the Story itself that can justify it at all. Indeed, from a purely spiritual point of view, there is much to repel in the life-history of the Kauravas and Pandavas and their deeds of adventure and war in the Epic as it is ordinarily understood. From beginning to the very end strange and extraordinary events take place, and not a few of them shock the moral sense and tend to dull and deaden the higher sensibility in man. And it is only a vague, undefined feeling that the whole conception is somehow divine, and that somewhere there is a missing link, now lost, and a mysterious meaning, at present understood, that has prevented the work from tainting the very springs of Hindu life : for the *Mahabharata*, together with that other great Epic, *Ramayana*, is to this day the great gospel of popular Hinduism, and is more widely known and read than the Vedas, Upanishads, and other Sacred Books.

The problem is, indeed, an extraordinary one. We have strange accounts of the birth of the principal characters of the Epic,—the Kaurava and Pandava brothers, Vyasa, Karna, Drona, Kripa and the rest. Sages lose self-control, nor hesitate to practise Niyoga,<sup>1</sup> and even the great Sun himself compels

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1. Niyoga means appointing a brother or a near kinsman to raise issue to a deceased husband.



a young, innocent maiden to his will. The unnatural Ganga drowns her sons as soon as they are born, and separates from her husband when he remonstrates; the great Bhishma carries away by force the daughters of the king of Kasi to get them married to his brother; and the mighty Arjuna, going out to practise Brahmacharya<sup>1</sup>, marries three wives instead, carrying away by force the sister of Krishna, the supreme Creator of the universe himself, and that too at the latter's suggestion. Then there is the Gambling Match, played openly with deceit; and Yudhishthira, knowing that it was so, stakes away his wealth, kingdom, brothers, himself, and his wife Draupadi,—everything. And then that spectacle of the insult and exposure of Draupadi in the very presence of heroes, kings, elders and preceptors; and, in spite of her protests and appeals, not a single voice is raised to protect her or prevent that disgraceful deed.

It is unnecessary to refer to more instances of this kind, or even to the marriage of five persons with one woman, contrary to all laws and customs of the Aryan race. We might pass on to the great battle of Kurukshetra, fought to gain not a kingdom or its half, but for five villages or towns, where the Pandavas might pass their days in peace. Millions of men are said to have been slain, and millions of homes made desolate for an object so trifling as this; and one might ask if there was not a man in that great assembly

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1. Brahmacharya is a vow of celibacy.

of heroes and kings, who came with their hosts to the battlefield, who could give to the *Pandavas*, out of his own, but five villages or towns, and spare his country all the havoc and horror of war !

And then, what of *Krishna* himself ? He is said to be the sole, supreme Creator of the universe, and yet it is he who urges the *Pandavas* to fight ; it is he who rouses the doubtful and despondent *Arjuna* to engage in deeds of blood ; it is he who is responsible for the battle from beginning to end,—its cause, course, conclusion,—everything. Not a law of honour but was scorned, not a rule of battle but was broken,—not so much by the *Kauravas* as by the *Pandavas*,—and all at the instance of *Krishna* himself. *Drona* is killed by means of a lie uttered by *Yudhishthira* at his suggestion ; it is he who leads *Arjuna* to shoot down *Bhishma*, when the latter has laid down his arms and refuses to fight ; it is he who clouds the last rays of the setting sun to deceive *Jayadratha* and enable *Arjuna* to slay his foe ; it is he who presses *Arjuna* to strike *Karna* dead when the wheel of his chariot sinks in the ground and he begs for a little time to set it free ; and it is he who suggests that *Bhima*, contrary to all rules of war, should strike *Duryodhana* on the thigh and slay him. And then, by a strange irony, as if this were not enough, *Krishna* is hailed as the supreme Creator of the universe by the very people he has helped to slay !

Judged by the standards of civilized people, many of the actions attributed to *Krishna* and

other heroes and gods are so reprehensible that there are not a few who hold that the *Mahabharata* refers to a semi-barbarous age, when the very idea of God was based on the low standards of contemporary life, and *Krishna* was perhaps a great prince, a popular hero, and a shrewd man of affairs, deified in after time. This, according to them, is a common characteristic of all the great, ancient Epics of the world; and they would explain away the episode of the *Bhagavad Gita* and other moral, philosophical and religious discourses, scattered throughout the work, as interpolations of later times, introduced to partake of the popularity of the Epic, and so pass current all the more easily among the people.

But the real character of the *Mahabharata* is as is described in the Epic itself,—a wonderful picture of the universe, a sacred work, logically composed and consistent throughout, containing the essence of the teachings of the Vedas, Upanishads and other Sacred Books, and explained by means of them too,—treating of Man, Nature, and God, the problems of life and death, Science, Philosophy, and Religion,—indeed, all that the ancients knew and understood in their day. It is written in a peculiar form of Sanskrit; and, while it appears to be a simple narrative at first sight, it is found to be a picture of great ideas and systems of thought, when interpreted in the light of the ancient method of Letter-analysis and in conformity with the teachings of the Sacred Books of the Hindus. And then all the strange and extraordinary events, and disgraceful and dishonourable deeds are seen

## 314 THE MYSTERY OF THE MAHABHARATA

to be but a beautiful exposition of great and sublime thoughts, and all the error is due to a misunderstanding of the original text. The following pages will show how far this can be maintained.

## CHAPTER II

### THE METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

THE general method of interpretation as applicable to all Sacred Books of the Hindus, has already been explained (MM.I, Chapter VII); but each work has also its own special key, and it is usually to be found in the book itself. And the whole "Story" of the Mahabharata can be proved to be a picture of all the great systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion in the light of the ancient method of Letter-analysis as well as the religious and philosophical discourses that are to be found scattered throughout the Epic.

In order, therefore, to understand the true character of the Mahabharata it is necessary to bear in mind the conclusions at which we have arrived in regard to the ancient systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion. We have shown in Volume II how, according to the ancients, there are five great creative energies of life,—Soul, Buddhi, Mind, the Senses of Knowledge and the Senses of Action,—the last associated with Food,—on which are based respectively the five great systems of Hindu Philosophy,—Vedanta, Yoga, Vaisesika, Nyaya, and Sankhya; while the Purva Mimamsa, the sixth, is a connecting link between them. Corresponding to these and their range of thought, again, we have the great systems of Hindu Religion,—

Vaishnavism, Saivism, and Brahmism,—the last divided into Buddhism and Jainism, while the Tantra is a connecting link between them all. The whole idea has been explained to be as follows:—

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
PRINCIPAL SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION					
VEDANTA AND VAISHNAVISM	Soul.....	Buddhi.....	Mind		
YOGA AND SAIVISM		Buddhi.....	Mind.....	Senses of Knowledge	
SANKHYA TANTRA AND BRAHMISM			Mind.....	Senses of Knowledge	Senses of Action
BUDDHISM			Mind.....	Senses of Knowledge	
JAINISM				Senses of Knowledge	Senses of Action

It is necessary for the reader to bear this clearly in mind, for the whole "Story" of the Mahabharata is but an account of the connection and conflict between the different systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion. We have already explained their central idea and range, and shown that there are in all seven points of view in regard to the problem of the creation of Life. If we hold that God is the sole supreme Creator of the universe, one without a second, the creator of Prakriti itself,—we have pure Vedānta. But if we agree that Nature or Prakriti exists co-eternally with him, but only as a spectator of his work, we have Yoga as the first manifestation of Vedānta and, for all practical purposes, identified with

it. If, on the other hand, we assign a small place to Prakṛiti as creator, we have Yoga in its own character without reference to Vedānta. Then, if we believe that God and Nature are equal or almost equal creators of life, we have the Vaiseṣhika. But if we hold that God has but a small place in the work of creation, which is due to Nature for the most part,—we have Nyāya. Again, if God is conceived but as a spectator of the drama of life created by Prakṛiti alone, we have another aspect of Nyāya, identified, for practical purposes, with the Sāṅkhya. Finally, if we think that there is no place for God in the scheme of the universe, which is the work of Prakṛiti alone, we have the the pure Sāṅkhya at the other extreme.

Thus we see that there is an obvious connection and conflict between the different systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion; and this is specially so in regard to the principal systems. We can have a conflict between principal Vedānta (Vaiṣṇavism) and principal Yoga (Sāivism); principal Yoga and principal Sāṅkhya (Buddhism and Jainism); and principal Sāṅkhya and principal Vedānta, thus:—

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY					
	Vedānta	Yoga	Vaiśeṣhika	Nyāya	Sāṅkhya
VEDĀNTA					
PRINCIPAL	Vedānta....	Yoga....	Vaiśeṣhika		
PRINCIPAL YOGA		Yoga....	Vaiśeṣhika....	Nyāya	
PRINCIPAL YOGA		Yoga....	Vaiśeṣhika....	Nyāya	
PRINCIPAL SĀṆKHYA			Vaiśeṣhika..	Nyāya....	Sāṅkhya
PRINCIPAL VEDĀNTA	Vedānta..	Yoga....	Vaiśeṣhika		
PRINCIPAL SĀṆKHYA			Vaiśeṣhika....	Nyāya....	Sāṅkhya

In each case we see that there is a common ground of agreement between the opposing systems, without which no discussion can ever take place. And it is this that corresponds to a "battlefield" in the language of war; for all debate may be likened to a combat, where each side, starting from some common point of agreement, marshals its array of arguments. All these points of view of the different systems of thought are examined in the Mahabharata in Story-form. Of these the most interesting as well as the most comprehensive conflict is between principal Vedānta and principal Sāṅkhya, or Vaiṣṇavism on the one hand and Buddhism and Jainism on the other,—and that is the subject-matter of the great "battle" of Kurukshetra.

MIND AS A MEETING PLACE.—In this connection we observe that the Vaiśeṣhika, based on the creative energy of the Mind, is a meeting place between all principal systems of Philosophy, and it is here that we should expect to get the conflict of the Story of the Mahabharata or the "battle" of Kurukshetra.

We have explained that each of the five creative energies of life corresponds to an idea of creation; and in connection with the Mind, the basis of the Vaiśeṣhika system of thought, we hold that God and Nature are equal or almost equal creators of the universe. Thus the conflict of the Story of the Mahabharata is that, starting from this position, *viz.*, that God and Nature are joint and equal or almost equal creators of life, can we prove,



by means of satisfactory evidence, that it is God alone who is the sole supreme Creator of the universe? That is the conflict between principal Vedānta or Vaishnavism (Vedānta-Yoga-Vaisheshika) and principal Sāṅkhya or Buddhism and Jainism (Sāṅkhya-Nyāya-Vaisheshika), — the chief subject-matter of the Epic.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SACRIFICE.—We have explained the Ascending and Descending Scales of thought<sup>1</sup>, and shown how through the idea of Sacrifice, which is creative, selfless, and beneficent action, characterized by self-control, and pervaded by the essence of God,—we can rise from a lower to a higher system of thought,—from Sāṅkhya to Vedānta; and when this idea is absent, we fall again from a higher to a lower system,—from Vedānta to Nyāya and Sāṅkhya once more. In this connection we have pointed out that it is Sacrifice that gives us the first idea of God, for it is the Law of Goodness that leads us to him. In other words, whenever we perform an action with a calm and balanced mind, that is, disinterested, and creative of good all to,—there we get the first idea of the presence of God in the universe; and conversely, when our actions arise out of anger and hate or an unbalanced mind, when they are selfish, characterized by fever and pain and destructive of good, God is denied, and we descend from a higher to a lower system of thought, ending in agnosticism or atheism. It is necessary to bear this in mind, for the Story of the Mahābhārata is an account of the Ascending and

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1. MM. II, Chapter V.

Descending Scales of thought,—showing how Man, by means of Sacrifice, can rise from Sankhya to Vedānta; and how, when this is forgotten, he sinks to Nyaya and Sankhya once more.

KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION.—We have observed that all systems of Hindu Philosophy can be rendered in terms of Knowledge or Action as the final goal of life, and shown that each of them admits the necessity of Action in proportion to its idea of God as creator of the universe, and regards Knowledge or the renunciation of Action as the final goal in proportion to its idea of Nature or Prakṛiti as the sole creator of life (MM. II, 119-121). Vedānta, believing that God is the sole, supreme Creator of the universe, holds that ceaseless action, performed as a Sacrifice, is the goal. Yoga, as the first manifestation of Vedānta and for all practical purposes identified with it, does the same; but Yoga, in its own individual character, giving a small place to Prakṛiti too as a creator, admits the supreme necessity of action as a Sacrifice, but holds that Knowledge, characteristic of Buddhi, its basic energy, is the end. The Vaiseshika, holding that Nature is joint with God, gives an even greater place to Knowledge, though it agrees that necessary actions must be performed as a Sacrifice; while Nyaya, believing that God is almost like a spectator of Nature's work, gives but a small place to Action performed as a Sacrifice, and holds that Knowledge or the renunciation of Action is the goal. The Sankhya, at the other extreme, believes that the world is created by Prakṛiti alone, and there is no place

for God in the scheme of life; and, since the world is full of sorrow and death, caused by the action of Prakṛiti,—the only way of escape is through cessation or renunciation of Action, achieved by means of knowledge of the true character of Prakṛiti and the individual Soul. And so it holds that the only goal, both immediate and ultimate, is Knowledge and the renunciation of all Action performed even as a Sacrifice. Thus we see that the more we believe in Action, the nearer we are to Vedānta; but the more we believe in Knowledge or the renunciation of Action, the nearer we are to the Sāṅkhya at the other extreme. Between the two lie Yoga, Vaiśeṣika, and Nyāya; and we accept these according as we hold that Knowledge is the final end, but give more or less place to the performance of necessary actions as a Sacrifice so long as we have to live in this world (MM. II, 119-121; 193-202).

✓ It is necessary to remember this conflict between Knowledge and Action, and their connection with the different systems of Hindu Philosophy, for the whole Story of the Mahābhārata is rendered in their terms; and that is the literal idea of “Kuru-kṣetra” or “the field of the imperative necessity of Action,” where the great “battle” of all systems of Philosophy takes

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1. Kuru-kṣetra means “(Kṣetra) the Field of Kuru;” and “Kuru” is the imperative form of “Kṛi” which means “to act.” “Kuru-kṣetra” may, therefore, be said to mean “the Field of the imperative necessity of Action.” In other words, it refers to the world of life, where we all agree that actions which are imperatively necessary must be performed.

place. Indeed, the whole world is said to be a Field of Action<sup>1</sup>; and so the problem of the Mahabharata may be said to be the problem of the world of life, where Man has to decide whether he should regard Action or its renunciation (Knowledge) as his final end and aim.

VEDIC GODS AND SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY.—We have explained that the idea of each system of Hindu Philosophy corresponds to a pair of Vedic Gods;—Vedanta to Vishnu and Vayu; Yoga to Indra and Agni; Vaisesika to Rudra and Soma; Nyaya to Dyaus and Prithvi and the two Asvins; and Sankhya to Varuna and Vritra; while the Purva or Karma Mimansa corresponds to Visvedevas or “All-gods.” And so whenever there is a reference to these gods we have to understand their connection with the corresponding systems of Philosophy and Religion.

THE METHOD OF LETTER-ANALYSIS.—We have observed that the Mahabharata can be understood as a picture of all the great systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion in the light of the ancient method of Letter-analysis. The character of this method, as applicable to all Sacred Books of the Hindus in general, has already been explained (MM, I, Chapter VII); but each work has also its own point of view and special meanings attaching to letters and syllables and words. If this method is to be successfully applied, it is necessary that each letter should have a limited number of meanings which should,

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1. MBh. Santi P. XIII, cxcii 19.

as far as possible, be applicable throughout the work ; and the following meanings of letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, the origin of which has already been explained (MM. I, 203, *seq.*) will be found to satisfy this test. In other cases of letters as well as syllables and roots, the ordinary dictionary meanings would apply, and the reader might refer to any standard dictionary or Sanskrit Kosa (lexicon) for the purpose.

## VOWELS

A, *A* Heart energy, Soul, or, its first manifest form, *Buddhi*.

*A* A little ; leading to or associated with ; like, related to.

I, *I* Mind ; to arise from.

U, *U* The senses of Knowledge.

*U* Woven with or woven into.

*Ri, Ri* The senses of Action.

*Lri, Lri* Prakṛiti or Nature as universal mother, characterized by creative action.

E, *Ai* To come near. (E is usually broken into its component vowels, A and I. *Ai* is a lengthened form of E).

O, *Au* Water, Prakṛiti or Nature. (O is generally broken into its component vowels,

A and U. Au is its lengthened form.)

### CONSONANTS

K The first creative energy of life,  
Purusha (God) or Prakṛiti  
(Nature) ; Soul ; Buddhi.

Kh Mind ; the senses of Knowledge.

G The senses of Knowledge.

Gh The senses of Action.

Gñ Objects of the senses.

Ch Mind, Moon.

Chh Ether ; tremulous.

J The senses of Action ; place of  
manifestation or birth.

Jh Wind ; Action.

Jñ Ether ; a jingling sound.

T The senses of Knowledge ;  
sound.

Th The senses of Action ; an object  
of sense.

D Air ; Prakṛitic energy of the Heart  
or Prakṛiti (Nature) in general.

Dh An object of sense ; a dog.

N Heart energy ; Soul ; Buddhi,  
characterized by strength.

T The senses of Action.

Th Food ; support, preservation.

D	An offering, a sacrifice <sup>1</sup> .
Dh	Mind ; keeping, holding.
N	The senses of Knowledge.
P	Wind ; action ; objects of the senses.
Ph	Prakriti (Nature); manifest life.
B	Water, Prakriti (Nature).
Bh	Mind; Prakriti (Name of Venus); 24 topics of the Sankhya.
M	The senses of Knowledge ; Mind or Moon ; Knowledge ; 25 topics; the Soul.
Y	He who ; Buddhi.
R	Buddhi <sup>2</sup> ; Mind or Desire ; The senses of Action <sup>3</sup> .
L	The ten senses of Knowledge and Action ; senses of Action.
V	Water or Prakriti.
S	The senses of Knowledge <sup>4</sup> ; Mind; Buddhi.
Sh	Mind.

1. D in the Upanishads means "subduing, giving, mercy" (Brih. Up. V, ii, 3; SBE, XV, 190). Self-control, gifts, and kindness are all associated with the idea of Sacrifice or creative, selfless and beneficent action.

2 One of the meanings of R is "Gold", which refers to Buddhi or the Sun (MM. I, 65-66).

3. The consonant R is connected with the vowel Ri which gives this meaning.

4. S occupies place No. 5 in the Diagram of the Alphabet; hence the meaning (MM. I 185).

S	God, Soul ; Heart energy manifest as Mind.
H	The last energy of creation, God or Prakṛiti (Nature),—more generally the latter.
Visarga	A symbol of Puruṣa or God; destruction.
Anusvara	A symbol expressive of the union of Puruṣa and Prakṛiti or God and Nature.

THE MEANING OF NUMBERS.—We have already examined the idea attaching to numbers (MM. I, 196-203), and the reader should make himself familiar with them as they are of assistance in explaining some points otherwise not easily understood. In this connection we might point out that the number one refers generally to God ; two to Prakṛiti or Nature ; three to the three Guṇas or qualities of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas ; four to the fourth stage in the manifestation of life, *viz.*, Prakṛitic Ether or the senses of Action ; five to five elements, their five attributes, the five senses of Knowledge, and the five senses of Action ; six to the Mind ; seven to Buddhi ; eight to the Heart or the Soul ; nine to the whole manifest universe ; ten to the ten senses of Knowledge and Action combined ; eleven to the Mind, above the senses ; twelve to Buddhi, above the Mind ; thirteen to the Heart or the Soul, above Buddhi ; fourteen contains the ideas of four and ten or nine and five ; fifteen of five and ten ; sixteen of ten and six ; seventeen of ten and seven ; eighteen of



five, six, and seven; twenty refers to the five elements and their five properties, and the ten senses of Knowledge and Action; twenty-one to the ideas of the numbers six, seven, and eight, or the Mind above the elements, their properties and the senses; twenty-four to the twenty-four topics of the *Sāṅkhya*; twenty-five to twenty-five topics of *Yoga*; twenty-six to the topics of *Vedānta*; twenty-seven to the numbers three and nine of which it is a multiple; thirty-three to the numbers ten, eleven and twelve of which it is composed; a hundred, thousand, or a lac (hundred thousand) is an indefinitely large number; and a hundred and eight refers to the numbers nine and twelve of which it is a multiple.

THE NUMBER EIGHTEEN.—We can now understand the significance of the number Eighteen which occurs so often in the "Story" of the *Mahābhārata*. It refers to the ideas associated with the numbers five, six and seven of which it is composed, and they signify the senses (of Knowledge), Mind, and *Buddhi*, and their corresponding systems of thought, *viz.*, *Nyaya*, *Vaiśeṣika*, and *Yoga*. There are eighteen *Parvas* or sections of the Epic; there are eighteen chapters of the *Bhagavad Gītā*; there are eighteen *Akṣauhīnis* or divisions of the armies of the *Kauravas* and *Pandavas* mustered on the field of *Kurukṣetra*; and the battle lasts for eighteen days. Again, eighteen years after the fight *Dhṛitarāṣṭra* passes away, and in another eighteen years it is the turn of *Kṛishṇa*, and he is immediately followed by the *Pandava* brothers; and then the whole drama comes to an end. In every case

in this connection the number eighteen refers to the three systems of thought, Yoga, Vaiseshika and Nyaya, based on Buddhi, Mind, and the senses of Knowledge respectively, to which the numbers seven, six, and five correspond; and we have to remember that it is these three systems, which, in one form or another, are under debate. But it is necessary to bear in mind that the ancients never accepted atheism or the pure Sankhya as a satisfactory system of thought, and always associated Nyaya with the Sankhya to make Sankhya-Nyaya on which is based the theory of Jainism as a system of religion (MM.II, 326, *seq.*). Hence Nyaya, represented by the number five, includes all of the Sankhya point of view that can legitimately be examined. Again, Buddhi, the basis of Yoga, has a two-fold character, and it is associated with both Yoga and Vedanta; and, in the latter system it is the first manifest form of the Soul and, for practical purposes, identified with it. Hence the number seven, referring to Buddhi, contains all of Yoga and Vedanta that can legitimately be introduced in the debate. And so we have all the five great systems of thought connected with the number Eighteen.

FIGURES OF SPEECH: SYNONYMS, ETC.—In addition to these there are a number of ways in which ideas are interpreted in the Mahabharata, and in every case there is a sacred authority in their support. When the method of Letter-analysis is of little assistance or a doubt is likely to arise, we get an easy reference to the Vedas, Upanishads, or other Sacred Books; or else a synonym would come

to our help to express the idea more clearly. Sometimes, again, a metaphor or a simile or a figure of speech would tell us exactly what is meant. If, for instance, we are unable to understand the idea of the name Arjuna, we will be told that he is the son of Indra who, the Upanishads tell us, is identified with Prajnatman or the self-conscious Soul with which Buddhi—whose deity he is, is for practical purposes identified<sup>1</sup>. But if this is not clear, he will be called Bharata which, in the Satapatha Brahmana, signifies Air or Breath<sup>2</sup>, the vehicle of the Soul. But if even this is not enough, he will be called Dhananjaya which, the Dictionary tells us, means Breath or vital Air. Thus we can identify Arjuna with Prana or the vital breath, the energy of all action in Man and the vehicle of the Soul. And then, as the individual Soul is always conceived to be of the same character in its essence as God, we can understand why Arjuna is identified with Krishna, the supreme Creator of the universe in the light of Vedanta. Similarly, if Kuntī requires to be explained, she is called Prithā, which belongs to the same root as Prithvī, our planet Earth (MWD. pp. 645-646); and then she is said to be the daughter of king Prithu, who, in the Vishnu Purana, is said to be the father of the Earth (MM.I, 253); and so we can identify Kuntī with our planet, where both the Vegetable and Animal kingdoms (Karna and the Pandava brothers)

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1. Indra in the Vedas is the deity of Buddhi (MM. I, 339-357) which for practical purposes is identified with the Soul.

2. Cf, MM. I, xliv, n. 2.

are born. In the same manner, if Drupada is difficult to understand, he would be called Yajnasena "the lord of Sacrifice," to show what he represents.

PERSONIFICATION.—In addition to synonyms we have similes, metaphors, personification and other devices of the poet's art to make the abstract concrete and to convey the ideas of systems of Philosophy in Story-form. For instance, a Man refers to the idea of God (Purusha) and a Woman to that of Nature or Prakṛiti (MM.II, 347-348); Again, Prakṛiti (Pra, kri, ti), even as its name implies, signifies Action (MM.II, 340-341); hence women are conceived as instruments of creation<sup>1</sup>. Now, the different systems of Philosophy deal with the problem of creation in relation to Purusha and Prakṛiti or God and Nature; and we have explained that God is conceived as the sole Creator of life in Vedānta; in Yoga Prakṛiti or Nature is either a spectator of his work or has a small share in the work of creation; in the Vaisesika the two are joint and equal or almost equal creators of life; while in Nyāya God is conceived as either a spectator of Nature's work or has but a small share in the work of creation; and in the pure Sāṅkhya it is Nature alone who creates.

PERSONIFICATION OF SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY.—It is possible to render these ideas in terms of the association of Man and Woman in the creation of life. For instance, when a person or god is said to create by means of a seminal discharge,—for

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1. MBh. Santi P. XII, cexiii, 7.

that is conceived to be a creative energy of life<sup>1</sup>,—without any reference to a woman, he may be said to create in the light of pure Vedānta, and we are to suppose that it is this system that is personified. Then, if he has a creative discharge merely at the sight of a woman, we are dealing with Yoga ; but if he is married and has children, it is the Vaiseshika that is described. Again, if a woman is associated with a man and dominates him in every way, it is the Nyaya point of view ; and finally, when a woman creates without the aid of man, it is the pure Sankhya that is supreme. In this way we know that, when king Uparichara is said to have had a wife, but his children were born without association with any woman, we are dealing with the Yoga system of thought, according to which Prakṛiti or Nature (Woman) exists, but only as a spectator of God, or with but a small share in the work of creation. Similarly, when Ganga consents to become the wife of Santanu on condition that he would not interfere with her in any way, she is the Prakṛiti of Nyaya, and it is that system that is personified. When Santanu submits to her will, he is the Puruṣa (God) of Nyaya ; but when he protests and interferes with her action in drowning her children, he becomes active and so passes into the Puruṣa (God) of the Vaiseshika. Then Kuntī, without association with her “husband” Pandu has the power to call up any man or god at will, and by his means to create ; and this points to the Prakṛiti of Sankhya, where she can create without the intervention

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1. MBh. Santi P. XII, cxc, 15,

of God or "husband." Thus we see how systems of thought can be personified and represented in terms of the relations of men and women; and it is this that has been done in the Mahabharata.

PERSONIFICATION OF ENERGIES IN MAN.—In addition to systems of thought, we can personify different ideas and energies in Man. It is said in the Upanishads that Food, Breath, Mind, Buddhi, and Bliss have each the shape of a Man<sup>1</sup>. Water too is called a Man in the Upanishads<sup>2</sup>; and it requires only a little stretch of imagination to extend the idea to all the principal energies of different systems of Philosophy, and create out of them a great picture of the actions of men and women in real life.

METAPHORS, SIMILES, ETC.—Again we are told in the Upanishads that the body is a Chariot in which dwells the Soul. The Intellect (Buddhi) is the charioteer, the Mind the reins, the senses the horses, and the objects of the senses the roads. When the highest Self is in union with the body, the senses and the Mind, the wise people call him the Enjoyer<sup>3</sup>. And so we have car-warriors of different kinds in the Story of the Mahabharata, and we are to understand that we are dealing with the "body" or form of certain ideas or systems of thought personified. Similarly, Prana or Breath is said to be the chariot of the gods (or

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1. Ait.-Ar. Up. II. i-v; SBE. XV, 54-57.

2. Chh. Up. V. ix, 1; SBE. I, 79.

3. Ait.-Ar. Up. II. iii, 8, 2-3; SBE. I, 433; Katha Up. I, iii, 3-4; Mait. Br. Up. II, 6; SBE. XV, 12, 294.

the vehicle of the Soul). Its front part is speech, its wheels the ears, the horses the eyes, and the driver the Mind; and *Prana* or Breath (as Soul) mounts that chariot<sup>1</sup>.

THE CITY OF NINE GATES.—In the same manner the body is compared to a city with nine gates<sup>2</sup>, referring to the senses of Knowledge and Action combined,—the two ears, two eyes, two nostrils, one mouth, one organ of creation and one of excretion,—the nine gates or openings through which *Prana* or Breath can pass and act. And from this we can easily conceive of kingdoms of thought and action in relation to Man and the different systems of Philosophy. Again, the body is compared to a divine Lute<sup>3</sup>, and this can easily be associated with the idea of *Krishna* playing on his Flute, or breathing through the “body” of the universe as well as each individual life.

LIFE AS A SACRIFICE.—Then Life itself is compared to a Sacrifice, and we have pointed out how, in the Vedas, it is conceived as having been created by the Sacrifice of God himself, and how the whole idea of the *Brahmanas* is based on this idea (MM. I, 173-174; MM. II, 240, *seq.*) In this connection the senses, Mind, and *Buddhi* are said to be the seven flames of the sacrificial Fire, and their functions are the seven kinds of fuel to feed it. Then again the ten senses

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1. Ait-Ar. Up. II, iii, 8, 9 ; SBE. I, 234.

2. Chh. Up. VIII, i, 1 ; SBE. I, 125 ; BhG. V, 13.

Ait-Ar. Up. III. ii, 5, 3 ; SBE. I, 263.

are said to be the ten sacrificial fires, and the functions of the senses of Knowledge, Mind and Buddhi are compared to seven great priests who direct the Sacrifice. The Mind again is said to be the ladle, the actions are called wealth, and the result of this Sacrifice is said to be pure Knowledge<sup>1</sup>.

SACRIFICE AND GOD KNOWLEDGE.—We have observed that the ancient conception of Sacrifice is that of creative action, self-less and good, and meant for the benefit of all; and so it embodies the idea of God as inherent in it. In other words, whenever such an action is performed, the idea of God is always there. And so we are told in the Upanishads that when Krishna, the son of Devaki, understood the correct idea of Sacrifice, he never thirsted after other knowledge again<sup>2</sup>. This is the origin of the idea of Krishna in the Mahabharata,—always associated with creative action or Sacrifice.

THE EARTH AS A FIELD OF ACTION.—Then we have pointed out that our planet Earth is said to be a Field of Action,—a Kurukshetra—where we must act to live, and yet where we constantly debate the question whether we should do so or not. This debate or “fight” is always going on, both in the mind of Man and in the world of life around; and it is this, as we shall see, that is described in the great Battle of Kurukshetra.

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1. MBh. Asva. P. XIV, xx-xxi. Cf. Chh. Up. III. xvi-xvii; SBE. I, 50-52.

2. Chh. Up. III. xvii. 6; SBE. I, 52.



THE IDEA OF BATTLE.—All argument, all discussion and debate, may be conceived as a conflict of thought, as a battle of ideas and speech between the contestants; and, conversely, all deeds of blood in an actual war have, at their bottom, a difference of opinion, a conflict of emotion, interest, and action. Hence we can easily describe a great debate on great systems of thought as a great battle between mighty combatants on either side; and the idea of a "fight" itself may be traced to the Vedas and the Upanishads. We are told of the celebrated quarrel between the Senses, each striving for supremacy; and the term Sense is used in a comprehensive way, and includes not only the senses of Knowledge and Action, but Mind, and *Prana* or Breath as well. They struggle for a time, and then realize in the end that all of them depend for both their existence and action on *Prana* or Breath, and so are compelled to admit its superior excellence and power<sup>1</sup>.

THE "BATTLE" IN THE MAHABHARATA.—The idea of "battle" or the great debate of the Mahabharata is nothing more than a great amplification of this "quarrel" between the Senses and *Prana* (Breath), translated in terms of corresponding systems of Philosophy. We have *Vedānta*, associated with *Prana* or Breath, the vehicle of the Soul;—and of the Senses, conceived in their widest significance,—*Buddhi* refers to Yoga, Mind to the *Vaiseshika*, and the senses of Knowledge and Action to *Nyaya* and *Sankhya* respectively.

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1. Ait-Ar. Up. II, i, 4; SBE. I, 296-207; Brih. Up. I, v, 21; SBE. XV, 97.

Hence this quarrel between *Prana* on the one hand and Senses on the other may be said to be a "battle" between *Vedanta* on the one hand and the remaining systems on the other; and this, as we shall see, is exactly the case with the "Story" of the *Mahabharata*.

THE LANGUAGE OF WAR.—Again we have sacred authority for rendering ideas and energies in terms of the language of war. We are told that the body is the bow, the syllable *Om* is the arrow, and its point is the Mind<sup>1</sup>. We have already seen that the body is called a chariot, and the horses are the senses; and now we can easily conceive not only of car-warriors and horsemen, but of elephant-riders and foot-men too in the same light. And in the same manner we can think not only of bows and arrows and their points, but also of discus and mace, lance, sword and spear, armour, gloves, and other accoutrements of war. And all these, as we shall see, refer to ideas in terms of systems of thought.

OTHER FORMS OF SYMBOLISM.—In addition to these there are other forms of symbolism used in the *Mahabharata*. We have explained how the Sun, Gold, and *Buddhi* are identified; and so a reference to these points to the *Yoga* system of thought. In the same manner the Moon, Silver, Wine, and Mind are identified, and refer to the *Vaiseshika*. Similarly the two aspects of Ether, the senses of Knowledge and Action, Cow and

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1. *Mait-Br. Up.* VI, 24; *SBE.* XV, 322.

Horse, are identified, and refer to the Nyaya and Sankhya systems.

Then the four Castes and the four Ages of Time can also refer to the corresponding systems of thought. As we have explained, the Brahmana refers to Buddhi; Kshatriya to the Mind; Vaisya to the senses of Knowledge, and Sudra to the senses of Action (MM. I, 282-287); and so they would point to the corresponding systems of Philosophy,—Yoga or Yoga-Vedanta, Vaisesika, Nyaya and Sankhya respectively. We have already examined the idea of the four Ages of Time in terms of Buddhi, Mind, and the twofold aspect of Ether or the senses of Knowledge and Action (MM. I, 122 *seq.*), and they too would refer to the corresponding systems of thought.

Again a number of ideas are associated with animals, birds, flowers, and trees. We have shown that the Cow and the Horse refer to the twofold character of Ether or the senses of Knowledge and Action. In the same manner the elephant, deer, and dog, the lion and the ape, the swan, parrot and hawk, the fish and the snake, have a number of ideas attaching to them; and the banian tree and the lotus have a sanctity of their own. Again we have shown that the Serpent is the first manifest form of the universe and refers to Prakriti (MM. I, 113, *seq.*), while the whole geography of India may be understood as a picture of Brahmanda or the universe, and so to conform to the ideas of different systems of Philosophy (MM. I, 331, *seq.*).

✓ The systems of Philosophy and their corresponding Religions may also be described by means of certain symbols or marks. We have explained that Vishnu, Mahadeva, and Brahma are the deities of the three principal systems of Philosophy and their corresponding systems of Religion; and we are told that the Lotus is the emblem of Brahma; the Discus of Vishnu; and the Phallic emblem belongs to Mahadeva.

Again certain names and numbers are specially associated with certain systems of thought. For instance, we have the five senses of Knowledge and Action; and so the Nyaya and Sankhya systems, based on their character, may be represented by the number five. Then the Mind, above the senses, is the sixth in order; and so the Vaiseshika, based on the Mind, may be represented by the number six. Similarly Buddhi, above the Mind, is seventh in order; and so Yoga, based on Buddhi, may be represented by the number seven. In the same manner the Soul, after Buddhi, is the eighth; and so Vedanta, based on its character, may be represented by that number.

These numbers may also be slightly varied. At the bottom of the scale we have the Sankhya, based on the five senses of Action, and so represented by the number five. The next higher system is Nyaya, based on the five senses of Knowledge; and, as the higher energy includes the lower, and the five senses of Knowledge include the five senses of Action, Nyaya may be represented by the number ten. In the same manner Mind and its corresponding system, Vaiseshika, would be

represented by the number eleven; Yoga, based on *Buddhi*, by the number twelve; and *Vedānta*, based on the Soul, by the number thirteen. We shall see the significance of these numbers in the Story of the *Mahabharata*.

Then certain names are specially associated with these systems. We have explained that *Maya* is the creative energy of God, though it is sometimes associated with *Prakṛiti* as well (MM. I, 85-91), when it is misconceived as illusion. Hence *Vedānta*, based on the creative character of God as the sole maker of the universe, is specially connected with *Maya*. Yoga and *Nyāya* are called by their own names, though Yoga is misunderstood to mean "a trick," while *Nyāya* is said to imply "justice." The *Vaiśeṣika* is called *Dharma*, and the opening verse of the *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* contains this word. Finally the *Sāṅkhya* is inferred by *Mahat* or *Mahā*, identified with *Buddhi*, the first and highest manifest energy of *Prakṛiti*, regarded as sole creator of life in this system.

SIMILES AND METAPHORS.—Then we get a number of similes and metaphors scattered throughout the work with poetic abundance which, in addition to their fitness to the context, have a purely literal application as well. For instance, when a person is said to be fleet as the Mind, we might expect to have an exact reference to the character of the Mind and its corresponding system of thought, *viz.*, the *Vaiśeṣika*. When he is compared to the Wind, we might expect a reference to Hands or Action, related to this element

(MM. I, 70). Water or rain refers in the same manner to Prakriti, and so does Darkness or Night ; while Lightning, being electric or super-electric, refers to the character of the Soul, and Daylight and the Sun to Buddhi ; and these in their turn represent Vedanta and Yoga respectively.

Thus we see how we are to interpret the Story of the Mahabharata as a picture of the great systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion, in the light of all Sacred Books, in accordance with the ancient method of Letter-analysis, the significance attaching to numbers, and the different forms of symbolism and figures of speech current in the Vedas, Upanishads, and Brahmanas, or known to the poet's art. We shall now be in a position to examine the Story of the Epic to see if it is really so.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PLAN OF THE MAHABHARATA

WE have explained the different systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion, and their connection with one another. Suppose we were to construct, for the first time, a Story to describe these systems and their connection and conflict, making use of all forms of expression we legitimately can. Proceeding from the known to the unknown, we might perhaps begin with the pure *Sankhya*, and show how Man, believing that it is Nature (*Prakriti*) alone that creates, and so holding that the end of life is the renunciation of all action born of *Prakriti*, which makes for sorrow and death,—comes to understand the idea of Sacrifice, and rises from *Sankhya* to *Nyaya*, and thence gradually to *Vaisesika*, *Yoga*, and *Vedanta*. Or, inasmuch as the pure *Sankhya*, with its utter negation of Action, and so of God, can never be acceptable to a thinking mind, we might begin with the principal *Sankhya* (*Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisesika*) instead. We might start at its lower extreme, *Sankhya-Nyaya* or the Jaina system of religion, and show how we can rise to *Nyaya-Vaisesika* or Buddhism; and thence to principal *Yoga* or *Saivism*, (*Yoga-Vaisesika-Nyaya*) ending finally in principal *Vedanta* (*Vedanta-Yoga-Vaisesika*) or *Vaishnavism*. This would perhaps be a more satisfactory course, for the three principal systems cover a cer-

tain common ground, which gives us the basis of both agreement and conflict; and it is more easy to understand their transition from one to the other in this way. As we have observed, there can be no debate without a common ground, and there can be no Story without a conflict of some kind. The resultant systems of Philosophy have little in common between them. Each of them is based on a definite idea related to a creative energy of life; and, within the limits of this idea, it appears complete in itself. But the principal systems cover a certain common ground and are, for this reason, more suited for purposes of comparison and contrast; and so on further consideration we would probably be inclined to base our Story on the conflict of the three principal rather than the five resultant systems of thought.

THE MIND AS A MEETING PLACE.—We have explained that the character of the Mind is common to all the three principal systems of Philosophy, and if we decide to construct our Story in their light, we shall have to begin with the Mind; and, starting from this common ground, proceed to show how we can accept principal Yoga (Yoga-Vaiseshika-Nyaya), or go down to principal Sankhya (Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaiseshika), or rise to principal Vedanta (Vedanta-Yoga-Vaiseshika). In other words, seeing how the world of manifest life, specially in its higher forms,—*e. g.* Man,—is created out of the union of the male and the female,—for this is the philosophical idea based on the character of the Mind or the Vaiseshika system (MM. II, 105-106),—we have to find out whether it is the



Supreme Male or God alone, who is the sole creator of life; or whether he is associated with the Supreme Female or Prakṛiti; or it is the Supreme Female or Prakṛiti who alone creates. These are the three main points of view of the three principal systems as we have explained.

### THE PLAN OF THE MAHABHARATA.

THE LUNAR LINE.—As we shall presently see, this is exactly the plan of the Mahabharata. We have to begin with the Mind; and, as we have explained, the Moon is the presiding deity of the Mind (MM.I., 48, 74). As all principal systems meet in the Mind, the chief characters of the Epic, the Kauravas and Pandavas, as well as Krishna and his people, are said to belong to the Lunar race.

PRINCIPAL YOGA OR SAIVISM.—Of the three principal systems, principal Yoga or Saivism (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya) occupies the central place, and so we have to begin with it and see how we can go up to principal Vedānta or Vaishnavism (Vedānta-Yoga-Vaisheshika) or down to principal Sāṅkhya (Sāṅkhya-Nyaya-Vaisheshika), or Buddhism and Jainism. This, as we have pointed out, can be done through the idea of Sacrifice or its negation in our actions in the world.

PRINCIPAL SĀṆKHYA.—But the real Story must begin with principal Sāṅkhya (Sāṅkhya-Nyaya-Vaisheshika) or Buddhism and Jainism, for we have to show how Man can rise from the bottom of his

scale to the highest point of thought. Now we have explained that the principal Sankhya has two divisions, Sankhya-Nyaya and Nyaya-Vaisesika, corresponding to which we have Jaina and Buddhist systems of Religion. We have to place Man at the lowest point of thought, and that is Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism ; and, for convenience' sake we must place his opponents in Nyaya-Vaisesika or Buddhism. This will give us the first conflict between them ; but the two, being parts of the same principal system, will soon be reconciled, and Man will easily be able to rise from Jainism to Buddhism.

PANDAVAS AND KAURAVAS.—As we shall see, the five *Pandava* brothers are but five parts of one Man, and they are placed first of all in Sankhya-Nyaya or Jaina system of thought. Their opponents, the Kauravas, are conceived as Buddhists, believing in the Nyaya-Vaisesika ; and so we get the first connection and conflict between them.

THE PROBLEM.—And so the conflict begins. We have observed that the problem before us is to see how Man, placed in Jainism or Sankhya-Nyaya, can rise to higher forms of thought. His opponents belong to Buddhism or Nyaya-Vaisesika ; and, in order to understand the whole idea clearly, it is necessary that, while Man may rise from one system to another, his opponents should remain in the same system throughout.

SANKHYA-NYAYA AND NYAYA-VAISESIKA.—We have explained that the first conflict between Man

and his opponents is between Jainism and Buddhism ; and since the two are part of the same principal system, Man can easily rise from one to the other and accept the latter for his creed.

SACRIFICE AND GOD: DRAUPADI AND KRISHNA.—We rise from a lower to a higher system through the idea of Sacrifice, which contains the idea of God as inherent in it. Man (*Pandava* brothers) has risen from a lower to a higher system, and so is wedded to Draupadi or Yajnaseni, the embodiment of Sacrifice, and at the same time makes his first acquaintance with Krishna, the supreme Creator of the universe.

THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.—We have explained that the first conflict between the Kauravas and *Pandavas* corresponds to that between Buddhism and Jainism ; and it may be represented as follows : —

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	Vedanta	Yoga	Vaisesika	Nyaya	Sankhya
BUDDHISM (KAURAVAS)			Vaisesika....	Nyaya	
JAINISM (PANDAVAS)				Nyaya....	Sankhya

Man, by understanding the idea of Sacrifice and of God, has been converted to Buddhism. But Buddhism is really included in Saivism, as we have explained (MM. II, 292-293); and so Man finds it easy to pass into the latter system.

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	Vedānta	Yoga	Vaiśeṣika	Nyāya	Sāṅkhya
SAIVISM (PANDAVAS)		Yoga....	Vaiśeṣika....	Nyāya	
BUDDHISM (KAURAVAS)			Vaiśeṣika....	Nyāya	

As there is no real conflict between Saivism and Buddhism the kingdom of thought can be divided between them ; and this concludes the first episode of the Story of the Epic.

SAIVISM AND JAINISM · THE GAMBLING MATCH.  
But, while there is no conflict between Saivism and Buddhism, there is a lot of it between Saivism and Jainism, for the pure Sāṅkhya part of this system is entirely outside the scope of Saivism.

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	Vedānta	Yoga	Vaiśeṣika	Nyāya	Sāṅkhya
SAIVISM (PANDAVAS)		Yoga....	Vaiśeṣika....	Nyāya	
JAINISM (SAKUNI)				Nyāya....	Sāṅkhya

And so it is possible to arrange a conflict between Saivism and Jainism. They have a common meeting ground in Nyāya, and yet there is nothing in common between two aspects of Saivism and one aspect of Jainism,—the Digambara school, associated with the pure Sāṅkhya, holding that all actions, of whatever kind, must be renounced, and that there is no place for God in the scheme of the universe, for it is Prakṛiti alone who creates.

This is the second conflict of the Epic,—the Gambling Match. Man cannot refuse to accept the challenge, for he claims to have risen from Jainism to Saivism, and is called upon to prove his position. Now the Digambara school of Jainism has no place for God in its scheme; and yet Man claims that he has risen from this very position to Saivism or belief in God as the chief creator of the universe. Let us, therefore, assume, in the light of the Digambara school of Jainism to which Man himself belonged at one time, that there is no place for God in the creation of life. Let Man now prove, not only that he exists, but that he has a major share in its creation.

Man agrees to argue on the basis that there is no God in the universe, and then attempts to prove his existence. As might be expected, he fails, for no one can convince the atheist in this way. And so Man (Yudhishthira) loses all his possessions in the kingdom of thought, and is forced to agree that, if we believe that God does not exist, renunciation of all actions must be regarded as the final end.

THE CHARACTER OF PRANA OR THE SOUL.—Man, having failed to maintain his position of Saivism, has to study the whole problem of life again. He has realized that Saivism is no match for Jainism, so that if a person is a confirmed atheist or agnostic, it is impossible to convince him by any arguments or ocular proof based on Buddhi, Mind, or the senses of Knowledge—the range of Saivism. He

feels that the whole question must be examined in the light of *Prana* or self-conscious Breath, the vehicle of the Soul, characterized by both Knowledge and Action,—and not of *Buddhi*, Mind, and the senses of Knowledge. In other words, *Saivism* having failed against *Jainism*, he finds that it is *Vedānta* alone that can succeed, not only against *Jainism* but against the whole of principal *Sāṅkhya* (*Sāṅkhya-Nyaya-Vaisheshika*), including both *Buddhism* and *Jainism*.

THE BATTLE OF KURUKSHETRA.—And so Man studies the problem of life in the light of *Prana* or the Soul, the essence of *Vedānta*, after which he is prepared to try conclusions with the advocates of principal *Sāṅkhya*,—or *Buddhism* and *Jainism*, and its three resultant systems of Philosophy, *viz.*, *Vaisheshika*, *Nyaya*, and the pure *Sāṅkhya*. This is the Battle of Kurukshetra. On one side we have *Vedānta*, represented by its first manifestation, *Yoga*, and the two are for practical purposes identified,—and on the other we have the whole range of principal *Sāṅkhya*, though the quarrel is morespecially with *Buddhism*. The whole idea may be represented as follows:—

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	<i>Vedānta</i>	<i>Yoga</i>	<i>Vaisheshika</i>	<i>Nyaya</i>	<i>Sāṅkhya</i>
PRINCIPAL VEDĀNTA (PANDAVAS)	<i>Vedānta</i> ..	<i>Yoga</i> ..	<i>Vaisheshika</i>		
PRINCIPAL SĀṅKHYA (KAURAVAS)			<i>Vaisheshika</i> ....	<i>Nyaya</i> ....	<i>Sāṅkhya</i>

Starting from the common meeting place of the Mind,—according to which both sides admit that

God and Nature are joint creators of life,—Man has to prove that God is the sole supreme Creator of the universe ; or, if Prakṛiti exists, it is only a silent spectator of his work. Thus he has to prove his position of Vedānta, or of Yoga as identified with it for all practical purposes, even as Buddhi, the basis of Yoga, is with the Soul, the basis of Vedānta (MM. I, 67, n. 3). The opponents of Man, the Kauravas, are free to adhere to their Buddhist or Nyaya-Vaisesika point of view, and may introduce such aspects of the pure Sāṅkhya as they legitimately can, without assuming that there is no place for God in the scheme of the universe.

THE RESULT OF THE BATTLE.—Man this time does not fail. His chief opponents are Buddhists and not Jainas and they admit that it is necessary to perform actions as a Sacrifice, and hold that God has a certain share in the creation of life. And so the task of Man is more easy now, and he succeeds in showing that God is the sole supreme Creator of the universe. This is the result of the great debate or “ Battle ” of Kurukshetra.

THE DESCENDING SCALE OF THOUGHT.—We have seen how Man has risen from Jainism to Vaishnavism, or Sāṅkhya-Nyaya to Vedānta, in the Ascending Scale of thought. And now, in order to complete the whole cycle of thought, we must see how he can decline from Vedānta to Sāṅkhya-Nyaya or Jainism once more. We have explained that Man rises from a lower to a higher system of thought by means of the idea of Sacrifice ; and now we see that when he

abandons this idea, he sinks to lower systems of thought ending in Nyaya or Sankhya-Nyaya, (Jainism) once more.

This, in brief, is the plan of the Story of the Mahabharata,—the conflict of different systems of Philosophy and Religion through different stages in the Ascending and Descending Scales of thought. First of all we have a conflict between Jainism and Buddhism ; then between Buddhism and Saivism ; and we see that there can be no real difference between them. Then we have a second real conflict between Saivism and Jainism, in which it is Jainism that succeeds. And finally we have a great conflict between Vaishnavism on the one hand and Buddhism and Jainism combined on the other ; and the former succeeds. Then, in the end, we have the Descending Scale of thought as well, where Man is seen to slide back from Vedānta to Nyaya or Buddhism once more.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE HISTORY OF THE MAHABHARATA

We have observed that the Mahabharata is a picture of all the great systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion in Story-form. But it is generally believed that the Epic is a historical or quasi-historical work, a poetic narrative of the great kings and heroes of ancient India, who actually lived and ruled in the land, and have left behind them names that are still current in the country. The same is said to be the character of the Ramayana too,—the “Story” of the wanderings of Rama; and Rama and Krishna are the two favourite deities of the Hindus today, and many great and famous cities are still associated with their birth and scenes of activity,—Ayodhya, Mathura, Indraprastha, Dvaraka, and the rest. Had they never actually lived and ruled, how, it might be asked, could cities and countries have been associated with their life?—for in the Mahabharata are mentioned almost all the names of the provinces of India current to this day,—from Gandhara or Kandhar in the north to Madra or Madras and Lanka or Ceylon in the south, and from Sindhu or Sind in the west to Vanga or Bengal in the east.

But if, in spite of all this, the Mahabharata is really a picture of systems of Philosophy and Religion, the explanation is not far to seek. It is probable

that a number of these names were current in the country before the composition of the Epic, and were utilized for purposes of the narrative; but, as we have pointed out (MM. I, 331, *seq.*), the ancients conceived of India as a picture of the whole universe, and some of the names must have been deliberately coined to convey ideas of Philosophy. For instance, the name *Manasa*, literally "of Manas" or the Mind, given to a lake, might also refer to the character of the Mind. In the same manner *Dvaraka*, the name of a city, might also have its literal meaning as "a body with gates," referring to the human frame with its organs of the senses,—the eyes, ears, nostrils, etc., which are described as gates in the Sacred Books. This association of names of places with ideas, events, and individuals is not peculiar to the ancients alone; and many names of places, institutions, and even countries have been changed from time to time in more recent history to perpetuate the memory of ideas, actions, and men.

THOUGHTS AND THINGS.—Again, the ancients did not regard Thoughts as altogether different from Things. They held, even as modern Science is coming to believe, that all Matter is created out of the Mind (MM. I, 68); and so to them an Idea was as living a form of life as material things perceptible to the senses. This too is the essence of all Art, from Architecture to Painting and Poetry,—to change the abstract into concrete and the individual into the universal form; and it is to this that we owe all poetic devices and figures of speech. The Mahabharata, as a picture

of Philosophy, contains only a more general application of this method to systems of thought and the great creative energies of life ; and the images drawn are so human and true because ideas are conceived as real, living forms of flesh and blood, with human thoughts and human sympathies, and the actions of real, living men. Castes, customs, institutions and laws, as well as systems of Philosophy and Religion have all been rendered in the light of the great problems of life, and India becomes a miniature of the whole universe.

THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION.— But the Story of the Epic may be regarded as truly historical in the larger sense of the term. History is not a mere narrative of heroes and kings, or an account of their deeds of victory and war. It is not a mere description of the rise and fall of states, or the institutions and associations of men grouped together for social and political ends. We have begun to recognize that, much more than this, History is a record of movements of thought, resulting in actions and the establishment of institutions. In the social, economic, and political world parties, institutions, and organizations are formed on the basis of ideas and opinions, policies and principles ; and it is these that make history and shape the actions of men. And it is in this sense that the Mahabharata may be said to be a History, dealing with the rise and fall of systems of Philosophy and Religion in the Kingdoms of Thought ; and it is a matter of common knowledge that Religion has played a most important part in shaping the history of the world.

The rise and fall of these systems of Philosophy and Religion, and the story of their triumph and disgrace is the one great fact of early Indian history with which all students of the subject are familiar. We know how for a time the religions of Vishnu and Siva prevailed; how they were overthrown by the religion of Buddha; and how the former triumphed in the end once more. And this is exactly the course of the Story of the Mahabharata. We see how Buddhism prevails at first; then Man, born in Jainism, rises first to Buddhism, and then to Saivism and Vaishnavism, and succeeds in overthrowing Buddhism and Jainism everywhere.

Then we are told of great Princes in the past,—Asoka, Kanishka, and Harsha,—who were converted from Hinduism to Buddhism, and *vice versa*, and who held great Councils of learned and religious men from all over the land to discuss the principles and practices of their systems of thought. And the Gambling Match and the great Battle of Kurukshetra may be said to correspond to these great assemblies, where mighty “battles” of thought were fought by rival systems, and many kingdoms of Mind and Faith were lost and won. In this sense also the Mahabharata may be said to be a historical work.

Again, it is possible that a great and terrible War took place in India in the past, carrying away millions of men and spreading havoc around; and this might have suggested the theme of a universal conflict of Thought to a great Poet and sage of those days. All war is, at its root, a conflict of thought, emotion and interest, associated with the actions

of men,—bursting out at intervals into the strife of nations. Such a great war probably took place in India in the past, changing the whole course of its history. That would probably account for the Dark Ages of India, when the whole country, falling from the height of power, sank into dust before the attack of the foreigner,—the Greek, the Hun, and the Muslim from the mountains of the north.

There is also another sense in which the Epic may be regarded as historical. Wherever there are great systems of Philosophy and Religion, we have their teachers too, and it is probable that such great heroes and sages lived in India in the past. But in course of time their ordinary work-a-day life was forgotten, and they came to be idealized in their own teachings and deeds. Such is the idea of Buddha and Christ and the incarnations of Vishnu; but, if ever real men were associated with their ideas, the accounts that we have of them in the Sacred Books relate not so much to their actual life, as to the idealized conception of the form of God they personify.

Finally, the Story of the Mahabharata, as a picture of different systems of thought, is an account of the universal history of Man or the human race. We have seen how in the Ascending Scale of thought, culminating in Vedānta, we proclaim the victory of unceasing Action as a Sacrifice; but in the Descending Scale Man comes to believe that the Soul is a mere spectator of the work of Nature or Prakṛiti, and Knowledge

or the renunciation of Action is his goal. This in brief, is the history of each individual being as well as the whole human race. When we are young and strong and in full possession of our powers, we engage in actions, win victories and make conquests, and never seem to tire. But when we grow old, when our strength declines, and the spirit grows faint, we take life more quietly, and wish to become mere spectators of its play. This completes the whole cycle of existence, from youth to age and decay, of individuals, nations, and the whole human race. Vedanta and Vaishnavism correspond to action, life and success ; while Buddhism and Jainism to the decline of life when we fear that the end is come.

This is the essential character of the Mahabharata, and everything else is subordinated to this one idea, *viz.*, a picture of all systems of Philosophy and Religion in Story-form. It is said to be an "Itihasa," which is usually understood to mean "a history"; but, according to the ancient method of Letter-analysis, it signifies "a progress from the Philosophy of Nature to that of God;" and this, as we have pointed out, agrees with our idea of the Epic as a picture of all systems of Philosophy, from the pure Sankhya, with its belief in Nature as the sole creator of life, to Vedanta, holding that it is God alone who creates.

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1. Itihasa (Iti,h,a,sa) means "(Iti) That is to say, (h Nature or Prakriti (a) leading to (sa) God." In other words, it means "leading from Nature to God;" and that is really the idea of the Mahabharata.

THE DATE AND AUTHOR OF THE EPIC.—Another problem of the Epic relates to its date and authorship. It is said to have been originally composed by Vyasa, and recited by Vaisampayana at the great Snake-Sacrifice held by Janamejaya, the son of Parikshit, the grandson of Arjuna; and thereafter narrated to the Rishis by Souti (Adi P. I, i, 1-11). The original is said to consist of six million verses, out of which only a Lac or a hundred thousand are believed to be current among men. That is the Mahabharata we know, an abstract of the original work (Svarg. P. XVIII, v, 48-52). Souti is said to have known 8,800 verses; Suka, the son of Vyasa, an equal number, and Sanjaya, who narrated the Bhagavad Gita to king Dhritarashtra, an equal number too (Adi P. I, i, 81-82).

We have observed that the Mahabharata is a picture of the progress of Man from Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism to Vedanta, and this account of its author and reciters expresses the idea of its subject-matter and range. We shall see in the course of these pages<sup>1</sup> what these names signify and then we shall understand how they express the character and scope of the Epic, and are not names of persons in the ordinary sense of the term.

The Mahabharata, according to competent scholars, bears, in its different parts, the stamp of different authorship, and they believe that these parts have been composed at different times. We have observed that it is a Story of

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1. See Vol. IV.

the conflict of systems of thought,—between Jainism and Buddhism; Buddhism and Saivism; Saivism and Jainism; and Vaishnavism on the one hand and Buddhism and Jainism combined on the other. And the Philosophy of these is to be traced back to the Vedas; and so the Mahabharata is said to be the fifth or last of the Vedas. If, therefore, the Epic is really a picture of systems of Philosophy and Religion composed in a certain well-understood Story-form, there is nothing strange in its different parts having been composed at different times. The subject being vast and the method elaborate, it is natural that it should require collaboration. Indeed, it would appear to be the work not of a single scholar or poet, but of a great school of thought which seems to have flourished in India in the past. The Vedas contain the essence of all systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion, and they are explained in different ways in the Brahmanas and the Upanishads; and the same idea is expressed in the Puranas and Epics in Story-form. The subject-matter is the same, only the form of expression is changed from time to time; and those who adopted it knew what it implied. Hence the fact that different portions of the Mahabharata have been composed at different times, does not in any way militate against its unity of design or execution. It points all the more clearly to its having been planned in a scientific manner, where every addition is a new point of view explained and a new acquisition of thought. Indeed, it may be regarded as an Encyclo-



#### CHAP. IV. THE HISTORY OF THE MAHABHARATA 359

pædia of all Science, Philosophy and Religion of the Hindus of the past; and, like all modern works of this kind, required the collaboration of many minds, with each new addition of knowledge from time to time. But the central idea is the same, and it is with this that we shall deal in these pages.

CHAPTER V  
THE ESSENCE OF THE EPIC  
I. ADI PARVA

WE have examined the general plan and idea of the Story of the Mahābhārata; and here it would be convenient to give a brief account of all the eighteen Parvas or Sections of the Epic as a whole, and then proceed to examine the main Story in detail. We shall deal with the latter in the last Volume.

THE LUNAR LINE.—We have explained that the best way to construct a Story, as a picture of all the great systems of Hindu Philosophy, is to begin with the character of the Mind as a meeting place of all principal systems of thought. Corresponding to this we find that all the chief characters of the Epic, the Kauravas and Pandavas as well as Krishna, belong to the Lunar race, the family of the Moon, the presiding deity of the Mind.

THE COURT OF BRAHMA.—We have to begin at the very bottom of the scale, and show how we can rise from principal Sankhya (Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisesika), or Jainism and Buddhism, to principal Vedānta (Vedānta-Yoga-Vaisesika) or Vaishnavism; and so the very first scene of the Mahābhārata opens in the Court of Brahma,

the deity of principal Sankhya or Buddhism and Jainism (MM.II, Chapter XI).

UPARICHARA.—We have shown that in the three principal systems of Philosophy and Religion principal Yoga or Saivism (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya) occupies the central place; and, starting from this system, we can either go up to Vaishnavism or principal Vedanta, or, if we deny the idea of Sacrifice, we can go down to principal Sankhya or Buddhism and Jainism. It is, therefore, convenient to make a beginning with Saivism, and that is personified by Uparichara<sup>s</sup>, the king of Chedi. He refers in particular to Buddhi, the highest energy in this system, and so is said to be a devotee of Indra, the deity of Buddhi.

GIRIKA,—According to Saivism God and Nature, or Purusha and Prakriti, are regarded as joint creators of life; and so the king has Girika for his wife. But in the domain of Buddhi, specially associated with this system, Prakriti is a mere spectator of the work of Purusha, who alone creates. And so Uparichara has no creative contact with his wife. He is filled with a desire to create, and his creative energy, or *semen virile*, comes out at the very thought. It is stored up in the world of manifest life or Prakriti, and that is an *Apsara*

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1. We shall examine the meaning of this and other names in the light of the ancient method of Letter-analysis when we deal with the whole Story in detail in the next Volume. Here it is unnecessary to burden the reader with technical details of interpretation.

or Water-nymph, Water being regarded as a symbol of Prakṛiti. As Saivism holds that Puruṣa and Prakṛiti, or Man and Woman, are joint creators of life, out of the creative energy of Uparichara arise a boy and a girl, Matsya and Satyavatī,—the former representing the Puruṣa, and the latter the Prakṛiti, of Saivism.

SANTANU.—We have now to examine the connection between principal Yoga and principal Sankhya, or Saivism on the one hand and Buddhism and Jainism on the other. The latter is personified by Santanu, the Puruṣa of principal Sankhya, (Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisesika); but, as this system has no place for Puruṣa or God in its pure Sankhya aspect, Santanu refers more specially to Vaisesika and Nyaya, the basis of Buddhism. We have explained that Buddhism is connected with both principal Sankhya (Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisesika) and principal Yoga (Yoga-Vaisesika-Nyaya), or Saivism, and so Santanu is a connecting link between these two systems.

GANGA AND SANTANU.—Santanu personifies the Mind and the senses of Knowledge, or Vaisesika and Nyaya, as parts of Buddhism and Jainism (Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisesika). Both these systems hold that Puruṣa is associated with Prakṛiti; but, according to Nyaya he is but a spectator of her work, and according to the Vaisesika the two are almost equal, but the share of Prakṛiti is a little larger than his. Santanu must, therefore, be associated with a wife or Prakṛiti in both these systems, but with a different share in the work of creation in each.

Let us begin at the bottom of the scale. *Santanu*, as the *Purusha* of *Nyaya*, must be associated with *Prakṛiti*, but he can only be a spectator of her work. This *Prakṛiti* of *Nyaya* is *Ganga*. She is the chief creator of life, and so she cannot brook any interference on the part of her "husband." If he claims a share in the work of creation, that is, if he interferes with anything she does, he ceases to be the *Purusha* of *Nyaya*, and she, as *Prakṛiti* of that system, must leave him. This is the condition of her marriage with *Santanu*; and, as he is the *Purusha* of *Nyaya* at this stage, he agrees.

THE EIGHT VASUS.—We are told that there are eight divisions of *Prakṛiti*,—*Buddhi*, *Egoism*, *Mind*, and the five elements<sup>1</sup>; and so *Ganga* is the mother of eight *Vasus*. They are born of her and she is *Prakṛiti*; and, as *Water* is a symbol of *Prakṛiti* (*MM.* I, 37, n.2), she throws them into water as soon as they take their birth, to show that they belong to *Prakṛiti*.

BHISHMA.—But *Nyaya* does not deny the existence of God. It holds that he exists, only either as a spectator of the work of *Prakṛiti*, or with but a small share in its creation; and so even in this system all things are not of *Prakṛiti*. Rather in each form of life there is a *Purusha*,—something that does not belong to *Prakṛiti*. And so out of each *Vasu* or child of *Prakṛiti* there must remain something that does not belong to her,—that belongs

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1, BbG. VII, 4.

to Purusha and so survives<sup>1</sup>. Hence we are told that Bhîshma was allowed to survive, and he contained the energy of each of the eight Vasus. He personifies, therefore, the Purusha of Nyaya; and as Purusha in this system is either a spectator of Prakriti or has but a small share in the work of creation, Bhîshma remains a celibate through life, and cannot have an issue.

SANTANU'S INTERFERENCE AND GANGA'S DEPARTURE.—We have seen Santanu as the Purusha of Nyaya; but he is the Purusha of Vaiseshika too. We have seen how creation takes place in the light of Nyaya, and it is time we saw how it does in the Vaiseshika too. And so Santanu now becomes the Purusha of the Vaiseshika,—almost an equal creator of life with Prakriti,—and so he must “interfere” with the actions of Ganga. But she cannot admit his claim without changing her own character and becoming the Prakriti of the Vaiseshika; and, as she is unable to do so, she has to leave him when he ceases to be the Purusha of Nyaya. And so we are told that Ganga left her husband as soon as he interfered with what she did, and disappeared.

THE BIRTH OF VYASA.—Let us now return to Satyavati, the Prakriti of Saivism. As we have explained, the range of this system extends from Yoga to Vaiseshika and Nyaya; and in the first Prakriti has but a small share in the work of creation; in the second she has an equal

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1. We have explained that all life is associated with Purusha and death with Prakriti (MM, I, 260, n. 3, 4; 305, n. 3).

part with Purusha; while in the third Purusha has but a small share in the work of creation, and it is mostly she who creates.

We have dealt with *Ganga*, the *Prakṛiti* of *Nyāya*. Let us now examine the idea of *Satyavati* as *Prakṛiti* of *Saivism* (*Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyāya*). She has to act as *Pṛikṛiti* of *Yoga*, *Vaisheshika* and *Nyāya* separately; and as *Pṛikṛiti* of *Yoga* she can have only a small and casual creative contact with *Purusha*; and that is *Parasara* the sage, the *Purusha* of *Yoga*. As she has little creative contact with him, she remains a virgin after it; and the child of this union is *Vyasa*, who personifies *Buddhi* or the *Yoga* system of thought out of which he is born,—for parent and child are often identified in sacred literature.

We have explained that *Buddhi* may be considered in itself as characterized by certainty of judgment and peace (MM. I, 66, n. 1), or else as identified, for all practical purposes, with the Soul (MM. I, 67, n. 3). Both these aspects of *Buddhi* are personified by *Vyasa*. He is said to have been given to *Tapas* (heat, austerities), characteristic of *Buddhi*<sup>1</sup>; and, like consciousness or memory, characteristic of the Soul (MM. I, 431-432), makes his appearance whenever he is remembered.

**VYASA THE AUTHOR OF THE MAHABHARATA AND OTHER SACRED BOOKS.**—It is in this light

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1. *Buddhi* is symbolized by the Sun (MM. I, 65, n. 7), which is characterized by *Tapas* or heat; and so the Sun is also called *Tapana*.

that we have to understand the idea of Vyasa as not only the author of the Mahabharata, but also a number of Upanishads and Puranas, and the compiler of the four Vedas too. He personifies Buddhi as we have explained; and the idea of his authorship of the Sacred Books is that they are to be understood in the light of the character of Buddhi, both in itself and as identical with the Soul. We begin from the known to the unknown, and see around us that life is created out of the union of the male and the female; and, starting from this, we may rise to the idea of God as the chief creator of the universe, and Prakriti as either a spectator, or with but a small share in the work of creation. This is the idea of Yoga, personified by Vyasa, and we shall see that this is exactly the literal meaning of the word <sup>1</sup>.

SANTANU AND SATYAVATI.—Santanu is the Purusha of Vaiseshika and Nyaya, and Satyavati the Prakriti of Yoga, Vaiseshika and Nyaya. She has played the part of the Prakriti of Yoga, and now the two other systems remain. Both she and Santanu are Purusha and Prakriti of the same systems of thought, and so eminently suited to each other. But Santanu belongs to Buddhism and Jainism (Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaiseshika), while sheto Saivism (Yoga-Vaiseshika-Nyaya); and though both of them meet in the region of Vaisesihka and Nyaya, Satyavati belongs to a higher system than Santanu.



And so it is *Santanu* who goes out to seek her, and she agrees to marry him on her own terms.

VICHITRAVIRYA AND CHITRANGADA.—*Satyavati*, the *Prakṛiti* of *Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya*, is associated with *Purusha* in all the three systems, and in each of them she must have an issue. She has *Vyasa* to personify *Yoga*; and now she has two more sons, *Vichitravirya* and *Chitrangada* by *Santanu*, to personify *Vaisheshika* and *Nyaya* respectively.

THE DEATH OF SANTANU.—*Santanu* is the *Purusha* of *Vaisheshika* and *Nyaya*; and both these systems are now personified by his sons; and so he goes out of the picture and is said to have passed away.

THE DEATH OF CHITRANGADA.—*Chitrangada* personifies the *Nyaya* system of thought; but that is personified by *Bhīṣma*, and with a complete idea of what it implies. And so *Chitrangada* goes out of the picture too and is said to have been slain.

AMBA, AMBIKA, AND AMBALIKA.—We have had some idea of *Prakṛiti*. *Satyavati* is the *Prakṛiti* of *Saivism* (*Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya*) while *Ganga* of *Nyaya*. Let us now examine the idea of *Prakṛiti* more completely,

We are told that there are three forms of *Prakṛiti* associated with the psychical energy of the Heart, the Mind, and the Senses; and these are personified as *Ida*, *Mahi*, and *Bharati* in the *Vedas*

(MM.I, 345, *seq.*). Corresponding to these we have *Amba*, *Ambika*, and *Ambalika* in the *Mahabharata*, and these names occur in the *Vedas* too.

Now the *Prakṛiti* of the physical energy of the Heart is the *Prakṛiti* of the pure *Sāṅkhya*; and, as this system has no place for *Puruṣa* or God in its scheme of life, *Amba* the *Prakṛiti* of the Heart, can get no husband in the whole world.

*Ambika* is the *Prakṛiti* of the Mind, and she can have a *Puruṣa* or husband in *Vichitravīrya* who personifies the same energy. And so the two are married together.

*Ambalika* is the *Prakṛiti* of the senses (of Knowledge) or *Nyaya*. Who can be her *Puruṣa* or husband? Now we are told that the Mind itself may be included under the senses and is called the sixth sense (MM. II, 153, n. 1); and so *Vichitravīrya*, the *Puruṣa* of the Mind, can be an appropriate husband or *Puruṣa* of *Ambalika* too.

THE DEATH OF VICHITRAVIRYA.—*Vichitravīrya* personifies the *Vaisesika* as the upper limit of principal *Sāṅkhya* (*Sāṅkhya-Nyaya-Vaisesika*), and according to this system creation belongs more to *Prakṛiti* than *Puruṣa*. And so *Vichitravīrya* cannot create. He marries because the *Vaisesika* requires that *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛiti* should be united together for purposes of creation, and he dies without issue because the *Puruṣa* in this system does not really create.

THE NIYOGA OF VYASA.—We see that we have only two more *Puruṣas* left,—*Bhishma* and *Vyasa*.

Of these the former personifies *Nyaya*, and so cannot create. *Vyasa* alone, the *Purusha* of *Yoga*, is able to create ; and so he is called by *Satyavati* to do so.

But the *Purusha* of *Yoga* should be united with the *Prakṛiti* of *Yoga*. Here we have only the *Prakṛitis* of *Vaisheshika* (*Ambikā*) and *Nyaya* (*Ambalikā*). *Vyasa*, the *Purusha* of *Yoga*, by uniting himself with *Prakṛitis* of lower systems, declines from the *Yoga* system himself ; and that is the literal meaning of *Niyoga* (*Ni, yoga*), “decline of *Yoga*,” which he is said to have done in connection with *Ambikā* and *Ambalikā*.

We have explained that we rise from a lower to a higher system of thought by means of *Sacrifice*; but when *Sacrifice* is destroyed or denied, we fall from a higher to a lower system of thought. The word “*Niyoga*” means “the opposite or negation of *Yoga*,” and in the “*Niyoga*” of *Vyasa* we see how we can fall from *Yoga* to lower systems of thought by denying the idea of *Sacrifice*.

All *Sacrifice* is creative and selfless action, characterized by self-control and meant for the benefit of all. It embodies the idea of God, and gives joy to all. The union of man and woman, for creative purposes, is such an act of *Sacrifice*; but where it is characterized by violence or pain, it is a denial of *Sacrifice* ; and in such a union we sink from a higher to a lower state.

The union of *Vyasa* with both *Ambikā* and *Ambalikā* was characterized by fear and pain ; and so

in this case there was a fall from Yoga to lower systems of thought.

THE BIRTH OF DHRITARASHTRA.—*Ambika* closed her eyes in fear at the approach of *Vyasa*, and the idea of Sacrifice was destroyed thereby. She represents the Mind and so her son, the child of this union, by falling to a lower stage, would represent the senses of Knowledge or *Nyaya*. But it is not the mother alone who sinks; the father too shares the same fate. *Vyasa* represents *Buddhi*, and his son, born of this negation of Sacrifice, must represent one energy lower than he; and that is Mind or the *Vaiseshika*. *Dhritarashtra*, the son of *Vyasa* and *Ambika* represents, therefore, the Mind or the *Vaiseshika* on his father's side, and the senses of Knowledge or *Nyaya* on his mother's side. He personifies *Nyaya-Vaiseshika* or the two schools of Buddhism.

THE BIRTH OF PANDU.—*Ambalika* grew pale at the sight of *Vyasa*, and once again the idea of Sacrifice was destroyed. She personifies the senses of Knowledge or *Nyaya* and so her son, *Pandu*, represents the senses of Action or the pure *Sankhya* at the bottom of the scale. On his father's side, however, he represents the Mind, like *Dhritarashtra*; and so he may be said to personify the whole range of principal *Sankhya*, from Mind to the senses of Action,—that is, Buddhism and Jainism both. But, inasmuch as Buddhism is personified by *Dhritarashtra*, *Pandu* is more specially associated with Jainism or *Sankhya-Nyaya*.

A RESUME.—Let us now recapitulate. We begin with life as it is before us and see that it is created out of the union of the male and the female; and proceeding from this we have to find out whether it is the Male or the Female, God or Nature, that is the chief creator of the universe.

We begin, therefore, with Saivism (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya) which is based on this idea, and it is personified by Uparichara; with special reference to Buddhi, the highest energy of this system. His two children, Matsya and Satyavati, personify Purusha and Prakriti in Saivism.

After Saivism (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya) we have to get down to Buddhism and Jainism (Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisheshika), for we have to proceed from the known to the unknown in our quest of Truth; and the known is Nature or the world of life around us, on which these systems are based. That is personified by Santanu. But, as the pure Sankhya part of these systems has no place for Purusha or God in the creation of life, Santanu is more particularly the Purusha of Nyaya and Vaisheshika or Buddhism.

Ganga is the Prakriti of Nyaya. She is united with Santanu as the Purusha of Nyaya, and out of their union is born Bhishma who is the Purusha of this system.

Satyavati as Prakriti of Yoga is united with Parasara, the Purusha of that system; and out of their union is born Vyasa who represents the same system of thought.

Then Satyavati as Prakriti of Vaiseshika and Nyaya is united with Santanu the Purusha of these systems, and out of their union are born Vichitravīrya and Chitrangada who personify these systems too.

As Bhīshma, the Purusha of Nyaya, is already there, Chitrangada, the second Purusha of this system, goes out of the picture.

The Mind is always associated with the senses, and so Vichitravīrya, the Purusha of the Mind on which the Vaiseshika is based, is united with two forms of Prakriti,—of Mind as well as the senses of Knowledge. They are Ambika and Ambalika.

But Vichitravīrya is the Purusha of the Vaiseshika in the principal Sankhya (Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaiseshika) where the chief creative energy is said to be Prakriti and not Purusha. And so he cannot create and dies without issue.

Two Purushas alone remain,—Bhīshma and Vyasa. Out of these Bhīshma, the Purusha of Nyaya, cannot create ; and so Vyasa alone remains.

Vyasa, the Purusha of Yoga, now associates himself with the Prakritis of the Vaiseshika and Nyaya,—Ambika and Ambalika ; and since they belong to lower systems of thought, and the idea of Sacrifice is denied in their union, the result is a fall from Yoga to a lower system of thought. That is Niyoga.

Dhritarashtra, the son of Vyasa and Ambika, drops down by one degree lower than both his

father and mother, and personifies Vaiseshika-Nyaya or Buddhism,

In the same manner *Pandu*, the son of *Vyasa* and *Ambalika*, personifies the whole range of principal Sankhya or both Buddhism and Jainism. But, as *Dhritarashtra* represents Buddhism too, *Pandu* is more specially associated with Jainism.

*Vyasa* is also united with a slave maiden; and, as there is a lapse only on his side, *Vidura*, the issue of this union personifies the Vaiseshika which is only one degree lower than *Yoga* personified by *Vyasa*.

The whole idea of *Purusha* may now be represented as follows:—

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE.	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	Vedanta	Yoga	Vaiseshika	Nyaya	Sankhya
PRINCIPAL YOGA (SAIVISM)		Yoga....	Vaiseshika..	Nyaya	
PRINCIPAL SANKHYA (BUDDHISM & JAINISM)			Vaiseshika..	Nyaya.....	Sankhya
UPARICHARA*		Yoga....	Vaiseshika..	Nyaya	
SANTANU*			Vaiseshika..	Nyaya.....	Sankhya
VYASA		Yoga			
VICHITRAVIRYA*			Vaiseshika		
CHITRANGADA*				Nyaya	
BHISHMA				Nyaya	
VIDURA			Vaiseshika		
DHRITARASHTRA (BUDDHISM)			Vaiseshika..	Nyaya	
PANDU (JAINISM)				Nyaya.....	Sankhya

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\* Those who drop out of the picture are marked with an asterisk.

It will be noticed that the survivors, Vyasa, Vidura, Bhishma, Dhritarashtra, and Pandu personify Yoga, Vaisheshika, and Nyaya, and Buddhism and Jainism respectively. Of these the first three correspond to the range of Saivism or principal Yoga, and the last two of principal Sankhya.

The different forms of Prakriti may also be represented in the same manner as follows:—

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION (Physical Energy of the Heart)
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	Vedanta	Yoga	Vaisheshika	Nyaya	Sankhya
GANGA				Nyaya	
SATYAVATI		Yoga....	Vaisheshika....	Nyaya	
AMBA					Sankhya
AMBIKA			Vaisheshika		
AMBALIKA				Nyaya	

THE PLAN AND THE PROBLEM.—Thus we see that the two principal systems, Yoga and Sankhya (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya and Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisheshika), have been properly personified, both as a whole and in part; and it is possible now to proceed with the Story.

We have to place Man at the bottom of the scale, that is, Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism, while those around him are to belong to Buddhism; and this gives us the two halves of principal Sankhya. Then we have to see how Man can rise from Jainism to higher systems of thought.

We notice that Jainism is personified by Pandu, while Buddhism by Dhritarashtra; and so Man



should be born of *Pandu*, while his opponents should be the children of *Dhritarashtra*. We shall see now how the Story proceeds.

**DHRITARASHTRA AND GANDHARI.**—*Dhritarashtra* represents the *Nyaya-Vaisesika* or Buddhism, and in this system *Purusha* is associated with *Prakriti*. She is *Gandhari*.

**THEIR HUNDRED SONS AND ONE DAUGHTER.**—We have seen that it is *Prakriti* that is creative in principal *Sankhya*, and not *Purusha*. And so *Dhritarashtra* cannot create by himself. But the real truth is that *Prakriti*, even in the *Sankhya*, cannot create. It is God who is the real author of life. And so *Gandhari* gives birth to an unformed lump, which by the grace of *Vyasa* is transformed into a hundred sons and one daughter; and we have seen that *Vyasa* personifies *Buddhi* which, for practical purposes, is identified with the Soul, the energy of God. As the number hundred represents something large and indefinite in sacred literature (MM. I, 125), the hundred sons of *Gandhari* and *Dhritarashtra* personify innumerable forms of *Nyaya-Vaisesika* or Buddhist thought; and of these *Duryodhana*, the eldest, represents the chief idea of Buddhism himself. The daughter is the *Prakriti* of principal *Sankhya* or Buddhism and Jainism to which the mother belongs; and we have explained that a woman always personifies *Prakriti*.

**DURYODHANA.**—We have observed that *Duryodhana*, the eldest of the hundred sons of *Dhritarashtra*, personifies *Nyaya-Vaisesika* or Buddhism.

PANDU, KUNTI AND MADRI.—*Pandu*, as we have explained, represents *Sankhya-Nyaya* or Jainism. We may examine *Sankhya-Nyaya* from two points of view,—in connection with *Sankhya* and with *Nyaya*,—and this gives us the two divisions of Jainism,—the *Digambara* and *Svetambara* school respectively. *Pandu* has therefore to be associated with two forms of *Prakriti*, representing *Sankhya* and *Nyaya*, and they are *Kunti* and *Madri*.

THE BIRTH OF KUNTI.—*Kunti* represents *Prakriti* of the pure *Sankhya*, that is, as the sole creator of the universe. But the real truth is that it is God who creates *Prakriti* itself; and when, with his power, she creates, the people imagine that it is *Prakriti* that does so. *Kunti*, therefore, belongs to the family of *Krishna*, the supreme *Purusha* of *Vedānta*, the sole Creator of the universe; but she is given away to another prince, *Kuntibhoja*, and is brought up by him as his own daughter.

KUNTI AND THE BRAHMANA'S BOON.—As *Kunti* is the *Prakriti* of the pure *Sankhya*, regarded as creative in itself, she has the power of invoking any deity she likes with intent to create.

KUNTI AND KARNA.—As we have explained, the creative energy of *Prakriti* in the *Sankhya* is identified with vital energy or *semen virile*, transformed out of blood, into which Food is changed. Hence *Prakriti* may be said to give birth to Food which creates. That is *Karna*, representing the Vegetable kingdom, seed, grain, or corn, which constitutes ultimately the food of all living creatures, whether herbivorous or carnivorous.

PRITHA.—We have observed that our planet Earth may be identified with the Prakṛiti of the Sāṅkhya (MM.I, 49-50) ; and so Kuntī is also called Pritha, which is akin to Prithvī or our planet Earth. The birth of Karna or grain further implies that the Vegetable kingdom or Food is created out of the Earth ; and in the Upanishads the Earth itself is identified with Food (MM. II, 226, n. 5).

KARNA AND THE SUN.—The father of Karna is said to be the Sun, and as soon as Karna is born, Kuntī places him in Water. This means that when the Earth (Kuntī) is heated by the Sun, and water is present too, grain or seed (Karna) is created in the Earth. It germinates when it is placed in water.

THE FIVE PANDAVA BROTHERS.—We have seen the birth of the Vegetable kingdom in Karna ; and now we must deal with the birth of Man as personifying the Animal kingdom in its highest form.

The body of an animal may be divided into two parts, namely, the head and the trunk on the one hand, and legs on the other. In Man the forelegs of an animal correspond to arms (MM.II. 345). These two divisions may be said to belong to the two mothers, Kuntī and Madri ; and their three and two sons personify the head and trunk, and arms and legs of Man respectively. Yudhishthira is Buddhi, centred in the crown of the head ; Bhīma Mind, centred in the brow ; Arjuna Prana or self-conscious Breath, moving through all the organs of sense from the ears to the

organ of excretion,—thus completing the whole trunk. There remain the fore and hind legs of animals, or arms and legs of Man ; and they are personified by Nakula and Sahadeva respectively.

The birth of the five *Pandava* brothers corresponds to the birth of a child, head foremost. First of all the crown of the head appears, and that is Yudhishthira ; then the brow, and that is Bhima ; then the organs of the senses,—ears, eyes, etc., through which Breath or *Prana* passes, and that is Arjuna ; then the arms and then the legs appear, and they are Nakula and Sahadeva. Again, the arms and legs are similar in form and lie together, and may be spoken of as twins. So are Nakula and Sahadeva.

THE BIRTH OF MAN.—The five *Pandava* brothers are, therefore, five different parts of one Man. They are born in the pure *Sankhya* or *Sankhya-Nyaya*, personified by *Kunti*, *Madri* and *Pandu* ; and we have to see how Man, born in this way, can rise from the surroundings of his birth to pure belief in God as the sole supreme Creator of the universe.

THE DEATH OF PANDU, MADRI, SATYAVATI, AND AMBALIKA.—The place of *Pandu* is now taken by his five sons, and so he himself passes away. The pure *Sankhya* idea of *Prakṛiti* is the most important of all and contains almost everything that is associated with *Prakṛiti* in the other systems. And so *Kunti*, the *Prakṛiti* of the pure *Sankhya* survives, while *Madri*, *Satyavati*, and *Ambalika*, for whom we have no further need, pass away.

AMBIKA, GANDHARI, KUNTI.—We see that the principal Sankhya refers to Prakriti as the chief creative energy of life, and it is associated with three systems, Sankhya, Nyaya, and Vaiseshika. Corresponding to this we have only three survivors among women,—Ambika, the Prakriti of the Vaiseshika, Gandhari of Nyaya, and Kunti of the pure Sankhya. All the rest pass away.

THE STORY OF KRIPA.—Having personified Purusha and Prakriti in the different systems of Philosophy, we might now personify the Teachers of these systems. Of these Kripa personifies Sankhya or Sankhya-Nyaya, that is, the Jaina system of religion.

THE STORY OF DRONA.—Similarly, Drona professes the Vaiseshika-Nyaya or the Buddhist system of religion. He personifies the Mind as associated with the senses of Knowledge, to which these two systems correspond.

ASVATTHAMAN.—Asvatthaman represents almost the same idea as his father. He refers to the Mind as associated with the senses of Action, while his father to the Mind as associated with the senses of Knowledge only.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The Mind may be associated with the senses of Knowledge, or of Action, or of both. We have explained that Mind energy is electric, (MM.I, 66), while the senses of Knowledge and Action correspond to the two aspects of Ether with south-seeking and north-seeking magnetic poles (MM. I, 121; Fig. 20). As the association of the Mind with the senses corresponds to electro-magnetic energy, the latter may have a north-seeking pole or a south-seeking pole or both according to the direction of the energy.

DRUPADA.—We have now to personify the idea of Sacrifice, by means of which we rise from a lower to a higher system of thought. That is Drupada, also known as Yajnasena or “Lord of Sacrifice.” He personifies the idea of Sacrifice in the whole range of principal Sankhya or Buddhism and Jainism, that is, the Sacrifice of the Mind, and the senses of Knowledge and Action.

DRAUPADI AND DHRIŠHTADYUMNA.—We have now to distinguish between the creative and non-creative idea of Sacrifice. A Sacrifice is truly so if the action is performed in the name of God, if it is characterized by selflessness and self-control, if it is meant for the benefit of all and makes for happiness all around. A Sacrifice that is devoid of all these is a Sacrifice only in name. These two ideas of Sacrifice are personified by Draupadi and Dhrištadyumna respectively. The former always represents true Sacrifice; the latter does so only when associated with the idea of God.

SIKHANDIN.—There is a further idea associated with Sacrifice. Whenever an act of Sacrifice is performed, even though we make use of material forces of Nature, it is always ascribed to God and attributed to him. In other words Sacrifice has power to transform what belongs to Nature or Prakṛiti into what belongs to God (MM. I, 428). That is, Sikhandin, the third child of Drupada, who was born as a girl (Prakṛiti), but, by means of Sacrifice and austerities, was transformed into a man (Purusha).

KRIPA AS TEACHER OF THE PRINCES.—We have to begin always at the bottom of the scale; and so

Kripa, the teacher of Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism is appointed to teach the sons of *Pandu* (Man) and of *Dhritarashtra*. In other words, they all understand the principles of Jainism.

DRONA AS PRECEPTOR.—After Jainism comes Buddhism, based on Nyaya-Vaisesika, and its preceptor is *Drona*. And so he is appointed a teacher of the princes after *Kripa*. This means that they all understand the fundamental principles of Buddhism too.

RIVALRY BETWEEN KARNA AND ARJUNA.—Man has now grasped the full range of principal Sankhya, or Buddhism and Jainism, and he finds that he cannot accept the pure Sankhya, or the Digambara school of Jainism in any form. That system holds that all life is created by Nature or *Prakriti*, and its creative energy consists in *semen virile*, created out of Food. Now Food is personified by *Karna*; and, as Man has rejected the pure Sankhya, based on the energy of Food, we have here the first cause of hostility between *Karna* and the *Pandavas* (Man).

Again *Arjuna* represents Breath or *Prana*, and it is that which swallows Food (MM.II, 227, n. 2). Hence *Arjuna* claims superiority to *Karna*. But it is by means of Food that a creature lives; and so *Karna* claims that he is greater than *Arjuna*. The hostility between *Karna* and *Arjuna* corresponds to that between Food and the Eater of Food, and continues to the very end. At this stage, however, *viz.*, of principal Sankhya or Buddhism

and Jainism, Man admits that the Vegetable kingdom possesses the same essence of life as the Animal kingdom<sup>1</sup>, and so Arjuna and Karna are able to perform the same feats of strength in the Tournament.

YUDHISHTHIRA AS HEIR-APPARENT.—Man, born in the Sankhya or Sankhya-Nyaya (Jainism), has rejected that system and accepted Nyaya-Vaisheshika or Buddhism instead. He is, therefore, a more fit advocate of that system than those who have been born in it, for his conversion is a matter of conviction and not due to the accident of birth as in the latter case. Hence Yudhishthira, representing Buddhi or the power of reason in Man, is appointed heir-apparent to the kingdom of Buddhist thought in preference to the hundred sons of Dhritarashtra who are born in that religion, implying that this system owes its supremacy to the power of Man's reason alone.

BHIMA AND BALARAMA.—Man is now established in Nyaya-Vaisheshika, based on the character of the Mind and the senses of Knowledge. He therefore feels that he must understand the character of the Mind more clearly. Now we are told that the Mind is fastened to Prana or vital Breath (MM. II, 232, n. 2) ; hence the two must be brought together. Bhima, as we have seen, represents the Mind in Man ; and Balarama, the brother of Krishna, personifies Mind as associated with Prana or Breath ; and so we are told that Bhima received instruction from Balarama.

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1. Cf. MBh. Santi P. XII, clxxxiv, 10-17.]



THE HOUSE OF LAC.—By understanding the true character of the Mind, which is a connecting link between all principal systems of thought, Man will soon be in a position to transcend the limits of Jainism and Buddhism to which he still belongs. This rouses the jealousy of Duryodhana, and he wishes to confine Man to Sankhya-Nyaya, or Jainism, for the latter's association with Nyaya-Vaisesika or Buddhism is dangerous to the safety of that prince. This attempt to confine Man to Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism is described in the House of Lac.

THE ESCAPE.—But Man, having understood the true character of the Mind, cannot be restricted to Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism, based on the senses of Knowledge and Action. As Vidura represents the idea of the Mind in all principal systems of Philosophy, Man is able to escape from the House of Lac or Sankhya-Nyaya through his assistance. The “Bila” or “hole” through which the Pandavas (Man) escape from the House of Lac, refers to the true relation subsisting between the Mind and the ten senses; and Man, having known this, cannot be imprisoned in the Jaina system of thought.

BHIMA AND HIDIMBA: GHATOTKACHA.—Man needs to understand the connection between the Mind and the material things of life yet more clearly. He has understood its connection with the senses so far; and now he has to know that it is connected with all material things, composed of the elements, of which Ether is the first and

most important. This is represented by the marriage of Bhīma or the Mind of Man with Hidimba or the material things of life; and out of their union is born Ghatotkacha or Ether, associated with the Mind<sup>1</sup>.

DEATH OF VAKA.—Man now realizes that Prakṛiti or Nature is *not* the first or sole creative energy of life, and that is the idea of his slaying Vaka, the demon, who personifies Prakṛiti as the chief creator of the universe.

THE PANDAVAS AND DRAUPADI: THE APPEARANCE OF KRISHNA.—Man has risen from Sankhya or Sankhya-Nyaya (Jainism) to Nyaya-Vaisesika or Buddhism; and has, moreover, understood the true character of the Mind as linked with Prana, the vehicle of the Soul. Now we have explained that we rise from a lower to a higher system of thought by means of Sacrifice, which embodies the idea of God as inherent in it. Man may therefore be said to be married to or united with Sacrifice, and at the same time to have an inkling of God. This is the idea of the wedding of Draupadi,—who personifies creative Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses, and so is called Yajnaseni,—with the five Pandava brothers or Man. It is at this time that Krishna, the supreme Creator of the universe, makes his first acquaintance with the Pandavas. As Sacrifice is characterized by the idea of God, Draupadi is called Krishna too.

THE WIFE OF FIVE.—Each of the great energies of life of which Man consists,—*viz.*, Breath

or *Prana*, the vehicle of the Soul, *Buddhi*, Mind, and motion of legs and the action of hands,—is capable of a separate activity conceived as a Sacrifice. Hence all the five *Pandava* brothers, who personify these energies in Man, are wedded to *Draupadi*.

But all action is really performed by *Prana* or Breath. It partakes of Air, the element of all action (MM. I, 70), and it is the vehicle of the self-conscious Soul, which directs all action. This is personified by *Arjuna*; and so it is he who wins *Draupadi* or action conceived as a Sacrifice. But, since all energies of Man can be regarded as acting separately too,—though still under the control of the Soul,—she is wedded to all of them.

DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM: *INDRAPRASTHA* AND *HASTINAPURA*.—Man has now understood the whole range of principal *Sankhya*,—*Sankhya-Nyaya* and *Nyaya-Vaisesika*,—or Jainism and Buddhism. He has also understood the true character of the Mind, which enables him to pass on to higher systems of thought; and now he has grasped the significance of Sacrifice too. His opponents, the *Kauravas*, adhere to *Nyaya-Vaisesika* or Buddhism; and, as Man has accepted this system with all its implications, the kingdom of thought is divided between them.

But Man has understood the character of the Mind as fastened to *Prana*, the vehicle of the Soul; and he is also wedded to Sacrifice, with its idea of God. And so he can easily pass on to

the next higher scheme of thought, *viz.*, Saivism (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya) through the idea of the Sacrifice of the Mind. This would take him one stage higher than the Kauravas. But Buddhism, the latter's creed, is included in principal Yoga or Saivism ; and so, while the two are different, there can be no hostility between them. Hence it is thought wise that Man should have his own separate kingdom of thought, friendly, but different to that of the Kauravas. That is Indraprastha, the city of Indra, the deity of Buddhi, the highest energy of Saivism. The Kauravas remain where they were, that is in Hastinapura, the city of Nyaya.

THE EXILE OF ARJUNA : HIS THREE WIVES.—We have seen that while each of the great energies of Man may be regarded as functioning separately, it is really *Prana* or Breath that causes them all to act. Thus *Draupadi* (Sacrifice) has five *Pandava* brothers for her "husbands," and each of them may be conceived as associated with her separately. But *Arjuna* or *Prana* is also present there. This is the idea of *Arjuna's* presence when *Yudhishthira* is in *Draupadi's* company.

This renders it necessary for Man to understand the true character of *Prana* or Breath ; and that is the idea of *Arjuna's* twelve years of exile to a forest to practise *Brahmacharya* or asceticism.

While examining the character of *Prana* we see that it functions in connection with the senses of Knowledge and Action ; and that is the marriage of *Arjuna* with *Ulupi*. Then we see that it func-

tions in connection with the Mind, as a result of which Imagination is born. In other words, when *Prana* or Breath is centred in the brow, the seat of the Mind, we get Imagination ; and we actually see that all images of the Mind are centred there. This is the marriage of Arjuna with *Chitrangada*, and out of their union is born *Babhruvahana*, who personifies Imagination centred in the brow. Finally we see that *Prana* functions in connection with the whole world of Nature; and when it does so, the Soul—whose vehicle it is, is transformed into Egoism or *Abhimana*. That is the marriage of Arjuna with *Subhadra*, the sister of *Krishna*, and out of their union is born *Abhimanyu*, *Abhimana*, or Egoism.

THE BURNING OF KHANDAVA FOREST.—Man, having understood the idea of the Sacrifice of the Mind, and also of *Prana* or self-conscious Breath, is now established in principal Yoga or Saivism; and as this system is closely allied to principal Vedānta or Vaishnavism, he is on the threshold of this system too. This is indicated by the burning of the *Khandava* Forest by Arjuna, supported by *Krishna*, and at the instance of Agni, the deity of Buddhi, the highest energy of Saivism.

#### *A Summary of Adi Parva.*

The substance of *Adi Parva* may now be summarized as follows :—

(1). All knowledge is from the known to the unknown. We must begin, therefore, with the most well-known facts about the creation of life. We

see that, in its higher forms at least, life is created out of the union of the Male and the Female. Starting from this, we have to see whether it is the supreme Male or God alone, or the supreme Female or Prakṛiti alone, that is the one Creator of the universe.

(2). We begin, therefore, with the system of Philosophy which holds that all life is created jointly by Purusha and Prakṛiti, the supreme Male and the supreme Female,—and that is Saivism (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya).

(3). There is also another way of examining the problem. We may start at the bottom of the scale, and rise from thence to the top. We have seen that there are three principal systems of Religion, Vaishnavism, Saivism, and Buddhism and Jainism. We might begin with the last, and then see how we can rise to Buddhism and then to Saivism and Vaishnavism.

(4). We have now to see how Man, placed in Jainism, can rise to Buddhism ; thence to Saivism ; and finally to Vaishnavism.

(5). We can rise from a lower to a higher system of thought through Sacrifice, which embodies the idea of God. When Sacrifice is denied, we fall from a higher to a lower system of thought.

(6). All systems of Philosophy can be rendered in terms of the creative energy of Purusha and Prakṛiti. As these are spoken of as Man and

Woman, we can personify these systems in terms of Man and Woman too.

(7). Our problem is that we must begin with Saivism which holds that all life is created out of the union of the Male and Female or Purusha and Prakṛiti. Then again we have to start with Jainism, and show how we can rise from thence to Vedānta. In other words, we have to begin with Saivism and then drop down to Buddhism and Jainism. This can be done by doing violence to the idea of Sacrifice.

(8). Let us personify different systems of thought ; then by denying the idea of Sacrifice, let us get down to Jainism. Let us place Man in this system, and his opponents,—for without a conflict there can be no story and no plot,—in Buddhism, and then let us see how Man can rise from the system of his birth to higher forms of thought.

(9). As Man is placed in the Jaina system of thought and his opponents in Buddhism, it is easy for him to master the latter system and be converted to it. He finds, however, that he can do so only by means of Sacrifice, which contains the essence of the idea of God.

(10). Jainism is based on the character of the senses of Knowledge and Action; and by understanding the idea of their Sacrifice, Man ascends to Buddhism, based on the character of the senses of Knowledge and the Mind.

(11). Man now understands the idea of the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses of Knowledge as

well; and so he comprehends the idea of God better still. He has now risen from Buddhism to Saivism through the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses.

(12). As Buddhism is included in Saivism, there can be no hostility between Man and his opponents ; and so the Kingdom of Thought is divided between them, and for some time they live in friendship and peace.



## CHAPTER VI

### II. SABHA PARVA

THE ASSEMBLY HALL OF YUDHISHTHIRA.—MAN is now established in Saivism or principal Yoga, and we see a picture of it in the Assembly Hall of Yudhishthira.

THE RAJASUYA SACRIFICE—He has risen to this stage by means of the Sacrifice of the Mind ; and so he performs a *Rajasuya* Sacrifice<sup>1</sup> to commemorate his confirmation in it.

THE DEATH OF JARASANDHA.—The essential idea of Saivism or principal Yoga (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya) is that God and Nature are joint creators of life, and it excludes the pure *Sankhya* which denies him, as well as that aspect of *Sankhya-Nyaya* or Jainism which makes of him only a spectator of the work of Nature or *Prakriti*. The exclusion of these systems is described in the death of *Jarasandha*, without which the Sacrifice cannot be performed.

THE OFFER OF ARGHYA TO KRISHNA.—As the idea of God as chief creator is essential to Saivism or principal Yoga, specially with reference to *Buddhi* as its chief creative energy, the highest place of honour is to be given to God himself in this Sacrifice. Hence *Bhishma*, who represents

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1. *Rajasuya* Sacrifice refers to the Sacrifice of the Mind.

Nyaya as the lower limit of principal Yoga (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya), agrees that the Arghya or mark of honour should first of all be given to Krishna, the supreme Creator of the universe.

THE DEATH OF SISUPALA.—But this idea of God means the death of the pure Sankhya ; and so Sisupala, who personifies it, is slain in the presence of all.

THE SACRIFICE.—After this it is possible to perform the Rajasuya or the Sacrifice of the Mind without any hindrance.

THE CHAGRIN OF DURYODHANA.—Duryodhana personifies Buddhism or Nyaya-Vaisheshika ; and he now sees Man publicly established in a higher system of thought, viz., Saivism or principal Yoga (Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya). But he is unable to do anything, for he realises that his own system is included in it. Hence his chagrin.

THE PROPOSAL OF SAKUNI.—But while Buddhism or Nyaya-Vaisheshika is included in Saivism, Jainism, or Sankhya-Nyaya is not ; and one aspect of it, viz., the pure Sankhya or the Digambara school is entirely outside the range of Saivism. The connection between these systems may be represented as follows:—

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	Vedanta	Yoga	Vaisheshika	Nyaya	Sankhya
SAIVISM		Yoga....	Vaisheshika....	Nyaya	
BUDDHISM			Vaisheshika....	Nyaya	
JAINISM				Nyaya.....	Sankhya

Sakuni, who represents the Jaina system of thought, proposes that there should be a debate between him and Yudhishthira, who claims that he has accepted Saivism in the light of Buddhi or pure reason,—for he represents Buddhi himself; and he is sure that he (Sakuni) would be able to overthrow the *Pandava* prince. Man, born in Jainism,—the pure Sankhya or Sankhya-Nyaya,—claims to have risen to Saivism or principal Yoga in the light of reason; let him establish his claim in an open debate. Sakuni will take up the pure Sankhya position, *viz.*, that there is no place for God in the scheme of the universe. Let Man accept this at first and prove, in the light of his Buddhi or reason, that God not only exists, but has a substantial share in the work of creation.

THE HALL OF THE KAURAVAS.—As the Hall of Yudhishthira is a picture of Saivism or principal Yoga, even so we get a picture of the principal Sankhya or Buddhism and Jainism combined in the Hall of the Kauravas.

THE GAME OF DICE : SAKUNI AND YUDHISHTHIRA.—We have now a debate between Saivism or principal Yoga (Yoga-Vaisesika-Nyaya) on the one hand, and Jainism or Sankhya-Nyaya on the other. It is played between the representatives of the two systems. Duryodhana cannot play himself because he represents Buddhism which is included in Saivism, and so would be easily defeated. Yudhishthira is reluctant to engage in this debate, but he cannot refuse the challenge, for he claims to have risen from Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism to Saivism, and

must show how, in the light of reason, that can be done.

THE RULES OF THE GAME.—Before the discussion begins, they lay down their rules of debate. Yudhishthira is not to presume that God exists or has a share in the creation of life—for that is the very thing that he is called upon to prove. Then the final conclusion is to be examined in the light of Knowledge or Action as the final goal of life. If Yudhishthira succeeds, it will be agreed that the end of life is Action, for God would be an actor himself. But if Sakuni wins, the conclusion will be that the goal of life is Knowledge and the renunciation of Action.

THE DECEIT OF SAKUNI.—Starting in this way, Man is unable to prove in the light of reason that God exists and creates ; and so Sakuni presses his conclusion that the end of life is the renunciation of Action. This is the Deceit of Sakuni by means of which Yudhishthira loses the game.

THE STAKE OF DRAUPADI.—The conclusion now reached is that all actions, of whatever kind, must be renounced; for God has no place in the universe which is created by Prakriti alone, and we can escape from its toils only by renouncing *all* kinds of action. And here a question is asked whether acts of Sacrifice too must be renounced. It seems a fair question and a debate about the character of Sacrifice is believed to be necessary. This is the stake of Draupadi, who personifies the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses.

DRAUPADI IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL.—The idea of God is inherent in Sacrifice. But this very thing was excluded from the debate. Draupadi therefore holds that she cannot be properly brought into the Hall or this debate, for she cannot fit in with the scheme of the discussion. But her opponents hold that a debate on the character of Sacrifice is perfectly legitimate; and so Draupadi is dragged into the Hall (debate) by force and against her will.

THE UNROBING OF DRAUPADI.—Sakuni and some others hold that the conclusion to which Yudhishthira has been forced is that even acts of Sacrifice must be renounced; and so, since all life is now admitted to have been created by Prakṛiti, acts of Sacrifice can have nothing to do with the idea of God. This is the “unrobing” of Draupadi in the presence of all.

KRISHNA TO THE RESCUE.—Draupadi protests and points out that when we are afflicted with sorrow and grief, we instinctively remember God, and that in itself is a proof,—which even the senses, on which Jainism is based, cannot ignore,—that there is God. Were it not so, how could we think of God at the time? Her opponents admit the force of this argument; and that is the idea of Draupadi’s remembering Krishna in her anguish. He comes to her rescue and the attempt to “unrobe” her fails.

FURTHER INSULT TO DRAUPADI.—But while her opponents admit the point she has made, they are not convinced, and still they hold that, in the light of their discussion, the idea of God as a creator

has not been established, and so even acts of Sacrifice must be renounced. And so further insults are heaped on Draupadi even after she is "rescued" by Krishna.

DHRITARASHTRA'S INTERVENTION.—But now the tables are turned on her opponents. If acts of Sacrifice must also be renounced, the position of Buddhism or Vaiseshika-Nyaya itself becomes untenable, and the only true and logical creed is of the Jainas. And so king Dhritarashtra and his sons must also renounce their own faith; for Buddhism admits the necessity of Sacrifice; and if the latter must be abandoned, there is no place whatever for Buddhism too. And so the King, seeing what turn the debate has taken, is forced to intervene<sup>1</sup>. He admits the necessity of

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1. The Gambling Match is a debate between atheism and agnosticism on the one hand, and dualism on the other. No one can succeed against atheists or agnostics if they are allowed to challenge those who believe in God and call upon them to prove, in the light of reason, that He exists and creates; for no one can prove the existence of God by assuming first of all that He does not exist, and then offer proof that He does. The only way to meet the atheist and the agnostic is to turn the tables on him, to challenge him, instead of accepting his challenge. If he does not believe in God at all, if he is a true follower of the Jaina system of thought, he must, like the Digambaras, admit that we must renounce all necessary acts, refuse to take food, wear clothes, or seek shelter. In other words, the only logical conclusion is suicide. If, however, the atheist or the agnostic believes that he must live, he must admit the necessity of Action, performed as a Sacrifice; and then once more we rise to the idea of God, first as a spectator, then as an actor, but unaffected by action, because performing it is a Sacrifice. It is only in this way that we can dislodge an atheist or an agnostic.

performing acts of Sacrifice; and with that the idea of the existence of God is restored, and Man is allowed to hold to the faith of his choice, *viz.*, Buddhism or Saivism, at will. This is the idea of the restoration of the *Pandavas* to their kingdom through *Draupadi*.

THE SECOND GAME.—But Man has succeeded in retaining his position indirectly, and not by direct evidence. This is hardly a satisfactory proof of the idea of God; and so he is required to discuss the question once more. That is the second Game

THE EXILE OF THE PANDAVAS.—But Man has no fresh proof to offer. And so he loses the game once more. But this time he promises to study the question more carefully, after which he would hold a further debate if he can. And so the *Pandava* brothers, accompanied by *Draupadi*, go into exile for thirteen years.

### *A Summary of Sabha Parva.*

(1). Man is now established in Saivism or principal Yoga, and renounces Jainism. He publishes his creed and invites all to examine it.

(2). Buddhism and Jainism, the two divisions of principal *Sankhya*, publish their own creed, and invite a discussion with Saivism.

(3). Then Jainism challenges Saivism to prove its position, and show how Man can rise from pure Jainism to Saivism. He must begin with the ad-

mission that God has no place in the scheme of life, and then prove in the light of Buddhi or reason, offering evidence satisfactory to the senses, that God not only exists but has a large share in the work of creation.

(4). Man is unable to show, on these premises, that God exists and creates. In the circumstances he has to accept the conclusion that it is Prakriti that creates, and so all actions must be renounced.

(5). The next question is whether acts of Sacrifice must also be renounced. In the light of this discussion Man must agree that such actions too must be abandoned.

(6). But if that be so, the only logical conclusion is that we must accept the creed of the pure Sāṅkhya and hold that the only true faith is the Digambara school of Jainism.

(7). Thus the position of Buddhism itself becomes untenable. But this the Buddhists, the chief opponents of Man, cannot accept; and so it is agreed that acts of Sacrifice must be performed, for life has to be carried on.

(8). This restores Man to his original point of view, *viz.*, that God exists and creates; for the idea of Sacrifice embodies the idea of God.

(9). But Man has not proved his position by means of direct evidence; and so he must examine the whole question once more and discuss it afresh when he is more fully prepared.



## CHAPTER VII

### III. VANA PARVA

THE BANKS OF THE GANGA.—THE world around Man is wedded to Buddhism, based on Vaiseshika-Nyaya; and it is from this stage that he must commence his quest. He must begin with Nyaya, at the bottom of the scale, and seek for proof in support of his belief. And so he comes to the banks of the Ganga, the Prakṛiti of this system, and rests under a great banian tree called *Pramana* or "Proof."

THE DISCOURSE OF SAUNAKA.—Here he studies the character of the systems under debates, *viz.* Jainism, Buddhism and Saivism. That is the discourse of Saunaka.

THE WORSHIP OF THE SUN.—Man now studies the character of the energy of the Sun, and realizes that it is that which causes all life to live and grow, including Food or the Vegetable kingdom, on which the idea of the creative energy of Prakṛiti or the pure Sāṅkhya is based. As the Sun is a symbol of Buddhi, the energy of the Yoga system of thought, this gives him a new proof in support of the truth of that system. This is the idea of the worship of the Sun by Yudhishthira.

KAMYAKA FOREST: THE VISIT OF VIDURA AND KRISHNA.—From Nyaya Man has to go on to the Vaiseshika, based on the character of the

Mind. And so he studies the nature of the Mind ; and as Mind is characterized by Desire (MM. I, 281, n. 7), he goes to the Kāmyaka Forest or the "Forest of Desire."

Man has to study the idea of the Mind in all the three principal systems of thought ; and so Vidura, who represents Mind in all of them, comes to visit the *Pandavas*.

We have seen how through the idea of the Sacrifice of the Mind Man rises from Buddhism to Saivism, or Nyaya-Vaiseshika of the principal Sākhya to principal Yoga (Yoga-Vaiseshika-Nyaya). And in the latter system, specially in its Buddhi-form, God is regarded as the chief creator of life. Again, Buddhi is, for practical purposes, identified with the Soul, the basis of Vedānta. And so, when Man reaches the Buddhi-stage of Yoga, he can easily pass on to Vedānta. Now Man has once again been established in principal Yoga, with its range extending to Buddhi ; and so *Krishna*, the supreme Deity of Vedānta, comes to visit him.

THE WORSHIP OF KRISHNA.—Man has now understood that God is the chief creator of life. Realizing this, he offers worship to *Krishna*, the God of Vedānta ; and this leads him to that system.

THE CAUSE OF PANDAVAS' MISFORTUNE.—Man realizes that the whole mistake in the previous discussion was that he had agreed to exclude the idea of God as the first condition of debate. And so *Krishna* tells the *Pandavas* that they had

lost because he was out of *Dvaraka* ; and *Dvaraka* means literally " the body with gates," and refers to the whole body of Man, with gates or openings of the senses,—the ears, eyes, etc. It also symbolizes the whole " body " of the world of manifest life, with its objects of the senses on which Jainism is based.

THE ADVICE OF VYASA AND THE MISSION OF ARJUNA.—Man is now made to understand that the whole problem is to be examined not so much in the light of Yoga as in the light of *Prana*, the vehicle of the Soul and the basis of *Vedānta*. If he understands it in the light of *Buddhi*, the latter should be regarded as the first manifest form of the energy of the Soul and, for practical purposes, identified with it. This is the advice of Vyasa and the mission of Arjuna to the city of Indra. And we have pointed out that Indra personifies *Buddhi* as identical, for practical purposes, with the Soul, and so does Vyasa.

SIVA AND ARJUNA.—Man has now to understand the whole range of *Vaishnavism* (*Vedānta-Yoga-Vaisheshika*) ; and we have seen how we can rise to it from *Saivism* (*Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya*). Arjuna must therefore please *Mahadeva*, the deity of *Saivism*, before he can understand the essence of *Vaishnavism* or *Vedānta*. This is the idea of the meeting between Arjuna and Siva before the former can come to the city of Indra.

IN THE CITY OF INDRA : ARJUNA AND URVASI.—  
After meeting Siva and understanding from him

all about Saivism, Arjuna enters into the region of Vedānta; and so he comes to the city of Indra. There he understands the true character of the Soul as neither male nor female. That is the idea of the nymph Urvashi's approaching him; and, when he turns away from her, she curses him, saying that he would be deprived of his manhood and become as one who is neither man nor woman. After understanding the true character of the Soul, Arjuna returns to his brothers.

JAYADRATHA AND DRAUPADI.—Jayadratha personifies the whole range of Buddhism and Jainism. As Buddhism and Svetāmbara school of Jainism both admit the necessity of performing actions as a Sacrifice, he claims to have understood the idea of Sacrifice, and so attempts to carry away Draupadi, the symbol of Sacrifice. But Jayadratha has understood the idea of the Sacrifice of the senses only and not of the Mind; for, with the Sacrifice of the Mind, we pass out of Buddhism and Jainism and enter the next higher system, viz., Saivism. Draupadi, therefore, cannot belong to Jayadratha; and so she is rescued by the Pundava brothers, and Jayadratha retires in humiliation and disgrace.

THE QUESTIONS OF THE CRANE.—Man has now been established in Buddhi, as the highest point of Yoga, and also as identified for all practical purposes with the Soul. He may, therefore, be said to have understood the essential idea of both Yoga and Vedānta. The test of his knowledge is given in the questions of the Crane.

END OF TWELVE YEARS OF EXILE.—Man is established in Buddhi, whose cycle is indicated by the number twelve. And so twelve years of his exile are over with this knowledge of Buddhi. He has now to realize the essence of the Soul in the light of Vedānta, the unmanifest in the manifest ; and, as the idea of the Soul is indicated by the number thirteen, the thirteenth year of exile is spent in quest of knowledge of the Soul.

*A Summary of Vana Parva.*

(1). Man has to understand anew the idea of God, and so he goes out into the world of life to seek for its proof.

(2). He starts at the very beginning, and examines different ways of approaching the problem.

(3). He sees proof of God as creator in the creative energy of the Sun, and feels that He is the supreme Creator of the universe.

(4). He realizes that he lost in the previous debate because he agreed at the very start to exclude the idea of God from the universe.

(5). He sees that the whole question has to be understood in the light of Vedānta,—the character of the Soul, and of Buddhi as its first manifest form, and identified with it for all practical purposes.

(6). He understands that he can rise to Vedānta only through Saivism.

(7). He grasps the true nature of the Soul, the basis of Vedānta, and sees that it is neither male nor female.

## CHAPTER VIII

### IV. VIRATA PARVA

VIRATA'S KINGDOM: THE DISGUISE OF THE PANDAVAS.—MAN has now to understand the character of the Soul, the unmanifest in the midst of the manifest; and so the *Pandava* brothers, now at the Soul-stage, must remain unmanifest or unrecognized in this world of life; and that is the kingdom of *Virata*.

IN THE KING'S SERVICE.—The essential idea of Vedanta arises out of Sacrifice, and Service is one of its principal forms. Hence Man must undertake to do service in this world or the kingdom of *Virata*. As each energy comprising Man is capable of service, all the five *Pandava* brothers as well as *Draupadi*, the symbol of Sacrifice, undertake to serve in the way they can.

KICHAKA AND DRAUPADI: THE DEATH OF KICHAKA.—People have often an erroneous idea of Sacrifice, and yet believe that they alone are correct. *Kichaka*, who personifies this idea, seeks, therefore, to possess *Draupadi*, the Woman of Sacrifice. But they must understand what is true and what is false Sacrifice and know that they cannot grasp its essence so easily. This is expressed by the death of *Kichaka* and his followers at the hands of *Bhima*.

THE CAPTURE OF THE COWS.—The opponents of Man, established in Buddhism, *viz.*, the *Kaura*-

vas and their allies, hold that they alone possess all knowledge that can be grasped by the senses; and so they come out to capture the Cows of Virata;—for the Cow, as we have explained, refers to the senses of Knowledge. But Man, established in Vedānta, convinces them that his Knowledge too can bear scrutiny in the light of the senses. And so Arjuna, who is Prana, the vehicle of the Soul, the basis of Vedānta, succeeds in routing the Kauravas, and brings back the Cows of Virata.

THE MARRIAGE OF UTTARA AND ABHIMANYU.—Man is now established in Vedānta and understands the true character of the Soul. But the Soul in Vedānta is characterized by unceasing action, which must take place in the world of manifest life. What, then, is the connection between the Soul and the world? Man understands that when the Soul acts and associates itself with the world, it is transformed into Egoism or Abhimana; and that, as we have explained, is the idea of Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna. And so, while the Soul, in the purity of its essence, has no contact with the world, it associates itself with the objects of life as Abhimana. Hence Arjuna (Soul) cannot marry Uttara, the daughter of Virata himself; but she is wedded to his son, Abhimanyu.

*A Summary of Virata Parva.*

(1). Man has now to understand the essential character of the Soul, the basis of Vedānta, the unmanifest in the midst of the manifest.

(2). He understands that the essential idea of Vedānta is based on Service and Sacrifice;

and he teaches it to those who have erroneous ideas on the subject.

(3). He holds that the true character of the Soul can be established by means of proof that the senses of Knowledge would accept as satisfactory.

(4). He agrees, however, that, while the Soul in the purity of its essence is contactless, it must associate itself with the world of life, when it is transformed into Egoism or Abhimāna.



## CHAPTER IX

### V. UDYOGA PARVA

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.—MAN has been established in Vedānta, while his opponents hold to Buddhism as before. He now demands that his claim be recognized, or else a general discussion be held. This is the idea of preparations for “War” or a general “debate.”

KRISHNA ASSISTS BOTH SIDES.—Buddhism does not deny the existence of God. In the Hīnayāna school it either gives a small place to him as creator, or holds that he is a spectator of the work of Prakṛiti. In the Mahāyāna school, on the other hand, it agrees that God and Nature are joint creators of life, only the share of God is less than that of Nature. Hence Duryodhana, the exponent of Buddhism, feels that he is entitled to have (the correct idea of) God on his side; and so he seeks the assistance of Krishna. Vedānta holds that God is the sole Creator of the universe; and so Arjuna, the Soul in Man, seeks Krishna's assistance too.

As the idea of God is included in both the opposing systems of thought, Krishna must assist both of them; and so he does. But Buddhism gives the first place to Nature, while Vedānta to God. And so Krishna gives all the strength of Nature (or his armies) to Duryodhana, and assigns

himself to Arjuna ; and both of them are pleased. They have that which they believe to be the Truth.

**BALARAMA'S NEUTRALITY.**—Balarama personifies Breath or *Prana* in its physical aspect, as the energy of strength and action, associated with the Mind. In the region of the Mind it is allied to the *Vaisheshika*, the basis of the *Mahayana* school of Buddhism ; while, as the vehicle of the Soul, *Prana* or Breath is associated with *Vedanta*. Balarama, therefore, feels that he must remain neutral, for he cannot divide his character like *Krishna*, and yet he is connected with both.

**THE EMBASSIES.**—The two systems, now preparing for "War," meet on the common ground of the Mind or the *Vaisheshika*, thus:—

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	Vedanta	Yoga	Vaisheshika	Nyaya	Sankhya
VAISHANAVISM (PANDAVAS)	Vedanta.....Yoga....Vaisheshika				
BUDDHISM AND JAINISM (KAU- RAVAS)	Vaisheshika....Nyaya...Sankhya				

As it is the function of ambassadors to bring the combatants together and establish a common ground of peace, embassies pass between Man, established in *Vedanta*, and his opponents, professing Buddhism and Jainism.

**THE ADVICE OF VIDURA : THE DISCOURSE OF SANAT-SUJATA.**—Vidura personifies the Mind in all the three principal systems of thought. As the "combatants" too meet in this common

ground, he tries to persuade *Dhritarashtra* to admit the point of view of Man. The king is convinced and converted, and begins to believe that God and Nature are joint creators of life and the share of God is greater than that of Nature. This is the idea of the Mind as the lower limit of Vaishnavism (*Vedānta-Yoga-Vaisheshika*) ; and this is the advice of Vidura and the discourse of Sanat-Sujāta.

THE MISSION OF KRISHNA.—As Buddhism gives a certain place to God as creator, *Krishna* himself goes on a mission of peace to the *Kauravas*, and tries to persuade them to concede the point of Man. But Buddhism cannot do so without abandoning its own character ; and so *Duryodhana*, the chief of this faith, is unable to agree.

DURYODHANA'S RESOLVE : THE CAPTURE OF KRISHNA.—Buddhism holds that God has only a certain share in the creation of life, and it is less than that of Nature or *Prakṛiti*. It believes that this is the Truth ; and so *Duryodhana* desires to "capture" *Krishna* while he is in their midst, to prove that he (*Duryodhana*) has caught the true idea of the nature of God.

THE DIVINE FORM OF KRISHNA.—But Buddhism does not embrace the full idea of God, and so *Duryodhana* cannot "capture" *Krishna*. The latter then shows his true divine form as the sole supreme Creator of the universe, which the people tremble to behold. But *Dhritarashtra*, having been converted to faith in God, is blessed with a vision, and sees Him as He is.

KRISHNA'S RETURN.—Buddhism cannot be easily converted to Vedānta ; and Man has yet to prove that his idea of God is true. And so *Krishna* (God) returns to the *Pandavas* (Man) without securing peace.

THE FIELD OF KURUKSHETRA.—The whole problem must therefore be debated anew ; and the simplest way of dealing with it is to divide the whole range of thought into two parts, each opposed to the other. In the one we may hold that God is the supreme Creator of life, and, if Nature exists, it is either a spectator of His work, or has, in any case, a smaller share in the work of creation than God. In the other we might hold that Nature is the supreme creator of life, and, if God exists, He is either a spectator of Nature's work, or has, in any case, a smaller share than Nature. Again, as all systems of Philosophy may be rendered in terms of Knowledge and Action, we may examine them in their light.

This is Kurukshetra,—“the Field of the imperative necessity of Action.” We have observed that the Kauravas are Buddhists, who admit that it is necessary to perform actions as a Sacrifice, but the final goal of life is Knowledge ; while the *Pandavas*, believing in Vaishnavism or Vedānta, hold that all life is Action from beginning to end, performed as a Sacrifice ; and it is twin-born with Knowledge, both being characteristic of *Prana* or self-conscious Breath, the vehicle of the Soul. Thus both sides agree that Action, performed as a Sacrifice, is necessary ; and so they meet in

Kurukshetra, "the Field of the imperative necessity of Action."

THE NATURE OF THE CONFLICT.—All conflict pre-supposes some common ground of agreement, without which there can be no debate. If the combatants have nothing in common between them, no discussion can arise; but a debate becomes possible if there is something upon which they both agree. Both the Kauravas and Pandavas hold that it is necessary to perform essential actions, and as a Sacrifice; and both of them believe that God and Nature come together in the creation of life. Starting from this common ground, the Pandavas (Man) have to prove that God is the chief Creator of the universe, and Nature is but a spectator of his work; while their opponents have to show that Nature is the chief creator of life, and God is but a spectator of its work, or has, at best, a smaller share in the work of creation than Nature. The conflict may now be represented in terms of systems of Philosophy as follows :—

CREATIVE ENERGIES	SOUL	BUDDHI	MIND	SENSES OF KNOWLEDGE	SENSES OF ACTION
SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY	Vedanta	Yoga	Vaisesika	Nyaya	Sankhya
PANDAVAS (MAN)	Vedanta....	Yoga....	Vaisesika		
KAURAVAS			Vaisesika..	Nyaya..	Sankhya

1. Kuru-kshetra means "the Kshetra (Field) of Kuru;" and "Kuru" is the imperative form of "Kṛi," which means "to act." Kuru-kshetra means, therefore, "the Field of the imperative necessity of Action."

The conflict is thus between Vaishnavism on the one hand, and Buddhism and Jainism on the other. The primary opposition is between Vedānta or its first manifestation, Yoga, on the one hand, and Vaiseshika and Nyaya,—the basis of Buddhism or the Kauravas, on the other; but the latter may take such assistance from the pure Sankhya as they legitimately can, without assuming that there is no place for God in the economy of the universe.

THE COMMANDERS OF THE KAURAVAS.—The three systems sponsored by the opponents of Man, viz., Vaiseshika, Nyaya, and Sankhya, may be examined separately as well as jointly; and in the latter case we may combine them as Sankhya-Nyaya and Nyaya-Vaiseshika. Thus we get five different ways of examining these systems; and they correspond to the five commanders-in-chief of the Kuru hosts who take the field one after another in turn. Bhishma, the first, personifies Nyaya; Drona, who comes next, Vaiseshika; Karna, who follows, the Sankhya in its bearing on the creative character of Food, which, as it is transformed into vital seed, forms the basis of this system. Then, after these systems are separately examined, we have Sankhya-Nyaya, personified by Salya, the fourth commander-in-chief: and he is followed by Duryodhana who personifies Nyaya-Vaiseshika or the Buddhist system of thought.

THE FORCES OF THE COMBATANTS.—We have observed that the Pandavas (Man) hold to Vedānta and believe that God is the sole supreme

Creator of the universe. But, Vedānta is, for practical purposes, identified with Yoga, even as the Soul is with Buddhi. In other words, we may hold that Nature co-exists with God, but is a mere spectator of His work, and He alone creates; and this will be as good as pure Vedānta in this world of manifest life. That, in this contest, is the point of view of the *Pandavas*, and so they may be said to hold to Yoga as the first manifest form of Vedānta. The *Kauravas*, on the other hand, are Buddhists, believing in the *Vaiseshika-Nyaya* ; but they are at liberty to seek such assistance from the pure *Sankhya* as they legitimately can. In other words, they cannot assume that there is no place for God in the scheme of life ; but they can attempt to establish the *Sankhya* point of view in the light of the creative character of Food, the basis of this system.

Now we have explained that *Nyaya* is based on the creative character of the senses of Knowledge, and we have five such senses ; while the *Vaiseshika* is based on the character of the Mind which, coming after the senses of Knowledge, may be represented by the number six. Thus the *Kauravas*, holding to *Nyaya-Vaiseshika*, may be represented by the number eleven, composed of five and six ; and even so we are told that they had eleven *Akshauhini*s or divisions of forces. In the same manner Yoga is based on the creative character of Buddhi ; and coming after the Mind, it may be represented by the number seven. As the *Pandavas* hold to Yoga or Buddhi, they are

said to have brought seven Akshauhini's<sup>1</sup> on the battlefield.

DHRISHTADYUMNA'S COMMAND.—The essential idea of Vedānta is based on Sacrifice; and so the chief commander of the Pandavas is Dhriśhtadyumna, who represents the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses. In other words, the Pandavas (Man) agree to establish their position in the light of the idea of Sacrifice and such evidence as would be acceptable to the Mind and the senses.

*A Summary of Udyoga Parva.*

(1). Man has been established in Vedānta, while his opponents adhere to Buddhism.

(2). Vedānta is based on the unmanifest energy of the Soul; but, as for practical purposes Buddhi is identified with the Soul, Yoga, based on Buddhi, may in the same manner be identified with Vedānta. Man is, therefore, willing to accept the position of Yoga as the first manifestation of Vedānta. That is to say, he is prepared to agree that Nature or Prakṛiti co-exists with God, but as a mere spectator of His work.

(3). Buddhism, the creed of the Kauravas, holds that Nature is the chief creator of life, and

1. The word Akshauhini is derived from Aksha, which means an organ of sense. It is by means of these "Akshauhini's" or "the evidence of the senses" or "Pratyaksha Pramāṇa" that each side has to prove its point of view. The term "sense" in the Upanishads is conceived in a very wide significance, as including not only the senses understood as such, but also the Mind, Buddhi, and Prāṇa or Breath.



God, if He exists, is either a spectator of the work of Nature, or, in any case, His share of creation is smaller than Nature's.

(4). As both sides have a place for Nature and God, an attempt is made to bring about an agreement between them.

(5). As, however, there are fundamental points of difference between them, the attempt fails;

(6). Both parties prepare for a great debate, and the whole problem is to be discussed in the light of the necessity of Action, in whose terms we can render all systems of Philosophy and Religion.

(7). Both sides agree that it is necessary to perform actions as a Sacrifice; and, starting from this position, Man proposes to prove that God is the sole Creator of life, and Nature, if it is a separate entity, is but a spectator of His work. He promises to offer such evidence as would satisfy the Mind and the senses.

(3). His opponents hold that they are free to combat this position of Man in the light of the Vaiseshika and Nyaya systems of thought, with such assistance from the pure Sankhya as they legitimately can have. They are also at liberty to combine the arguments of these systems in such manner as they choose. In other words, they can offer evidence according to (1) Vaiseshika, (2) Nyaya, (3) Sankhya, (4) Sankhya-Nyaya, and (5) Nyaya-Vaiseshika.

## CHAPTER X

### VI. BHISHMA PARVA

THE BHAGAVAD GITA.—BEFORE the debate commences the position of the combatants is briefly summarized; and the *Bhagavad Gita* or the Song of the Lord is an epitome of all systems of Hindu Philosophy in connection with the idea of God and the necessity of Action, and so it is said to have been told on the Field of Kurukshetra or “the Field of the imperative necessity of Action.” It consists of eighteen chapters; and the number eighteen, composed of seven, six, and five, refers to *Buddhi*, Mind, and the senses, the bases of the corresponding systems of Philosophy,—Yoga, *Vaiseshika*, and *Nyaya*; and so, like the argument of the eighteen *Parvas* of the Epic, and the idea of the eighteen *Akshauhinis*, and the eighteen days of the battle of Kurukshetra, the *Bhagavad Gita* deals with the *Vaiseshika* and *Nyaya* in the light of Yoga; and Yoga is conceived as the first manifest form of *Vedanta* and, for practical purposes, identified with it.

YUDHISHTHIRA SEEKS PERMISSION TO FIGHT :  
YUYUTSU JOINS THE PANDAVAS.—As is customary in all civilized societies, *Yudhishthira* seeks permission of his opponents to begin; and, as the object of all is the quest of Truth, he receives not only permission, but blessings too. Nor is it surprising that *Yuyutsu*, one of the *Kaurava* princes,

is converted to Vedānta, and argues on the side of Man (*Pandavas*).

THE BATTLE.—The debate begins, and first of all they examine the twofold character of *Nyaya*; for, as we have pointed out, this system is associated with both the principal *Sankhya* and principal *Yoga* (*Yoga-Vaisheshika-Nyaya* and *Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisheshika*). In connection with the former, God is regarded but as a spectator of the work of *Prakṛiti*; while in connection with the latter he is conceived as having a very minor part to play. As *Nyaya* is based on the creative character of the senses of Knowledge, and we have five such senses, the two aspects of this system may be represented by the number ten; and so *Bhishma* fights or argues for ten days. The debate relates to the character of the Mind and the senses in the light of different systems of thought, and each side maintains its own position with varying degrees of success. In conclusion it is pointed out on behalf of *Nyaya* that, as this system holds that God is either a spectator of the work of Nature or has, at best, but a small share in the work of creation,—it can be defeated only if it is possible to show that Nature itself is but an aspect of God. In other words,—as Man or *Purusha* represents God, and Woman Nature or *Prakṛiti*,—Vedānta, or its first manifestation *Yoga*, can succeed against *Nyaya* only if it can be shown that a Woman may be transformed into a Man. That would be a conclusive proof that all that belongs to Nature (Woman) really belongs to God (Man); and against this *Nyaya* would be unable to hold its own.

And so it is said that Bhishma could not fight with a person who, having been born as a woman (Prakṛiti), had been transformed into a man (Puruṣa). That is Sikhaṇḍin. At his approach Bhishma refuses to fight, and Arjuna, coming from behind, is able to overcome him.

THE BED OF ARROWS.—After this is done, there are still two more points to be examined. One is that since all actions are performed through the senses, is God possessed of senses that he acts? The reply is that he can, if he so desires, make use of the senses and act. This is the idea of the Bed of Arrows made for Bhishma by Arjuna.

ARJUNA BRINGS OUT WATER FROM THE EARTH FOR BHISHMA.—The next point is, can God really create Nature or Prakṛiti?—for that is the essential idea of Vedānta. The reply is that he can; for even the individual Soul, or Prāṇa its vehicle, can create its own vital energy (*semen virile*) when it functions in conjunction with the Heart and acts on Food. This is the idea of Arjuna's bringing Water out of the Earth for Bhishma to drink; and Water, as we have explained, symbolizes Prakṛiti.

### *A Summary of Bhishma Parva.*

(1). Man, wedded to Vedānta, and his opponents, adhering to Buddhism and Jainism, are now ready for a debate.

(2). Before the combat begins, we have a brief survey of all points at issue.

(3). The first argument refers to the twofold character of *Nyaya*, and the debate covers the whole range of this system. It is then shown that all that appears to belong to Nature or *Prakṛiti* really belongs to God; that God acts, and it is he who creates *Prakṛiti*. This can be effected through Sacrifice, and when it is done *Nyaya* is completely overthrown.

## CHAPTER XI

### VII. DRONA PARVA

DRONA AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.—THE discussion with regard to the twofold character of Nyaya having ended, we have a debate on the Vaiseshika. This is represented by Drona, and so he becomes the next commander-in-chief. The Vaiseshika is based on the creative character of the Mind ; but Drona represents it as associated with the senses of Knowledge ; indeed, as one of the senses of Knowledge itself. And, as there are five senses of Knowledge, he fights for five days.

THE BATTLE : THE ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE YUDHISHTHIRA.—The argument covers all relevant points under debate, and begins with the character of Nyaya. Then the Kauravas attempt to show that Buddhi is the energy of Yoga, and has nothing to do with Vedānta, nor can it be identified with the Soul at all. This is the idea of the attempt of Drona to capture Yudhishthira who personifies Buddhi.

ARJUNA AND SAMSAPTAKAS.—Then it is shown that it is impossible to dislodge the pure Sankhya except by the action of God himself, that is, by proving that it is he who creates the universe. This is the idea of Arjuna's fight with the Samsaptakas.

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1. Cf. MM. II, p. 153, n. 1.

THE DEATH OF ABHIMANYU.—We have explained that the Soul is characterized by pure self-consciousness ; but when it associates itself with Buddhi, Mind, and the elements, that is, the objects of life, it is transformed into Egoism or *Abhimana* (MM. I. xxxv, n. 1). That is *Abhimanyu*, the son of *Arjuna* (*Prana* or the Soul). Now the Soul cannot attain to pure self-consciousness unless Egoism or *Abhimana* is destroyed ; and this is accepted not only by Buddhists or the Kauravas but by Vedantists (Man) too. Hence *Abhimanyu* must die so that *Arjuna* may succeed.

ARJUNA'S VOW.—When Egoism or *Abhimana* is slain, the Soul, having attained to the perfect purity of self-consciousness, can cope with the whole range of the principal *Sankhya* or Buddhism and Jainism ; and that is the idea of *Arjuna's* vow to slay *Jayadratha*, who personifies these systems.

. KRISHNA'S PART IN THE FIGHT.—But the action of God alone can convince the *Sankhya*, which holds that all action belongs to *Prakṛiti* which alone creates. And so *Krishna*, the supreme Creator of the universe, must himself take part in the action against *Jayadratha*, who personifies the whole range of principal *Sankhya* (*Sankhya-Nyaya-Vaisheshika*) or Buddhism and Jainism. Again, the only way in which we can convince the *Sankhya* is to show, even as in the case of *Bhishma*, that what appears to belong to Nature or *Prakṛiti* belongs really to God. Thus, when we imagine that darkness prevails, we forget that the

Sun is there; and if only we could see the Sun behind the darkness we should feel convinced that it is the cause of both darkness and light. Even so, as Darkness is symbolic of Nature or Prakṛiti and the Sun or Day of Puruṣa or God, (MM. I, 96), *Kṛishna* shows to Jayadratha that the Sun yet shines behind the darkness he had caused in the west; and that puts an end to his *Sankhya* creed, and he is defeated or slain.

THE NIGHT ATTACK.—After this we have a further debate on the character of Nature or Prakṛiti; and, as the latter is symbolized in terms of Darkness or Night, we have a Night-attack in which all the combatants engage.

THE LAMP-LIGHT ATTACK: THE MOON-LIGHT FIGHT.—The Kauravas (Buddhists) maintain that it is Nature or Prakṛiti that creates. It is said that God is represented in terms of Light and Prakṛiti of Darkness. But the Kauravas argue that this light or creative energy belongs to Prakṛiti; for oil gives out light, and it is made of vegetable matter, identified with Prakṛiti. Even so the creative energy of life may be said to belong to Prakṛiti. This is the idea of the Kauravas' attack by the light of lamps burning with perfumed oil.

To this Man, established in Vedānta (*Pandavas*), replies that the Moon has even greater power to shed light than oil, and yet it is not matter. Hence it cannot be maintained that the power of light in oil is a conclusive proof that it is



*Prakṛiti* that creates. This is the significance of the *Pandavas'* counter-attack by Moon-light.

KRISHNA'S ADVICE.—As we have explained, *Drona* personifies the *Vaiseshika* as the higher limit of principal *Sāṅkhya*—holding that God and Nature are joint creators of life, but the share of God is somewhat smaller than that of Nature; and he is combating the *Vedānta* of the *Pandavas*. Now the *Vaiseshika* is a meeting place of all the three principal systems of Philosophy, and has an aspect related to each of them. And so we cannot combat the *Sāṅkhya* aspect of the *Vaiseshika*, represented by *Drona*, by means of its *Yoga* or *Vedānta* aspect. We have to oppose it by means of a higher system of thought, *viz.*, *Yoga* or *Vedānta*, in their own character, and not in their *Vaiseshika* aspect. Hence *Krishna* or the supreme Soul within each individual, tells Man to abandon his *Vaiseshika* point of view, and follow the *Yoga* system of thought. This is the advice of *Krishna* to *Arjuna* to abandon *Dharma*, which is but another name for the *Vaiseshika* (MM. I, xvii), and to follow *Yoga*, which refers to the philosophical system of that name; whereas the translator has understood “*Dharma*” to imply “righteousness,” and “*Yoga*” to mean a “trick” or “deceit,” and so *Krishna* is supposed to instigate a mean and dirty course of action.

ASVATTHAMAN'S DEATH: ASVATTHAMAN THE ELEPHANT.—*Drona*, as we have observed, personifies the *Vaiseshika*, based on the character

of the Mind ; and he holds that the Mind is associated with the senses of Knowledge more than the senses of Action. In other words, the Mind is conceived as a sense of Knowledge itself. Now to defeat Drona we have to prove that the idea of the Mind personified by him is incorrect. How can this be done ? The Mind is associated, not only with the senses of Knowledge, but with the senses of Action too ; and so Drona and Asvatthaman are inseparable and live and die together,—for Asvatthaman personified the idea of the Mind associated with the senses of Action. Hence Drona cannot be defeated or “slain” unless Asvatthaman is “killed.”

The only way to combat this idea is to show that it is not the Mind, but some other higher energy, that controls and acts through the senses of Knowledge and Action ; and if that is admitted, the idea that it is the Mind alone that governs the senses of Knowledge and Action, falls to the ground, and so Drona would easily be dislodged.

Krishna holds that it is the Soul that governs everything in Man ; and it is the Soul that, through its vehicle *Prana* or Breath, performs the functions of the senses of Action ; and so he asks Arjuna (*Prana*) to advance this argument, and to say that Asvatthaman is “slain.” But Man thinks that higher than the Mind is *Buddhi* ; and he has to argue his case, not so much in the light of the unmanifest energy of the Soul, as of the manifest energy of *Buddhi*,—and the two are, for practical purposes, identified ; and so he holds that

it is best to argue that it is *Buddhi* that controls and directs the senses of Knowledge and Action. Hence *Arjuna* suggests that *Yudhishthira* should say that *Asvatthaman* is "slain." Now *Bhīma*, who represents the Mind, agrees that it is *Buddhi* more than the Mind that acts through the senses; and so he tells *Drona* that *Asvatthaman* is slain. But if it is really *Buddhi* that does so, the question must be debated in the light of *Buddhi*, and not of the Mind; and so *Drona* does not trust *Bhīma*, but asks *Yudhishthira*, who personifies *Buddhi*, if it is really so.

**YUDHISHTHIRA'S LIE.**—We have now to show that it is *Buddhi* that acts through the senses more than the Mind. At the same time we are told that *Buddhi* is characterized by Knowledge more than Action, and its chief quality is calmness and peace. How then can we reconcile the two? We have seen that it is impossible to dispute that it is *Prana* or vital Breath that causes all the action of the senses, and *Prana* is the vehicle of the Soul. In other words we might say that it is the Soul that really acts. But the Soul is, for practical purposes, identified with *Buddhi*; and so we might say that it is *Buddhi*, that acts through the senses. This, when properly interpreted, is exactly what *Yudhishthira* said; and it is this that is misunderstood as a "lie."

**DHRISHTADYUMNA SLAYS DRONA.**—We have explained that it is by means of the idea of Sacrifice that we rise from a lower to a higher system of thought; and so we can rise from the *Vaisesika*,

based on the Mind, to a higher system, only by means of the Sacrifice of the Mind. This is *Dhrishtadyumna*, who represents the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses of Knowledge, and it is he who "slays" *Drona*.

THE VOW OF ASVATTHAMAN.— *Drona* held that the Mind is like a sense of Knowledge; and it was possible to combat this idea by holding that *Buddhi* is characterized by Knowledge even more than the Mind; and so *Buddhi* may be said to be associated with the senses of Knowledge more than the Mind. In this way it was possible to defeat or "slay" *Drona*. But *Buddhi* is not ordinarily understood to imply Action. It is only in a special sense, as identified for practical purposes with the Soul, that it may be regarded as functioning through the senses of Action. Hence, we have still to hold that it is the Mind that directs and controls the senses of Action. And so *Asvatthaman*, who represents this idea, cannot be "slain."

Again, we have observed that it is by means of the idea of the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses that we rise from the *Vaiseshika* to higher systems of thought. But here we might ask if the Mind and the senses are always characterized by Sacrifice. The reply is that it is only when they function selflessly and in the name of God that there is Sacrifice, not otherwise. This is the vow of *Asvatthaman*, that he would "slay" *Dhrishtadyumna* and the *Panchalas*. He undertakes to show that it is only in the name or presence of God that the Mind and the senses function in a spirit of Sacri-

fice; but when the idea of God is absent, their so-called Sacrifice comes to naught, and all such actions must be renounced.

*A Summary of Drona Parva.*

(1). After a discussion on the twofold character of Nyaya, we have a debate on the Vaiseshika, based on the Mind, where the Mind is specially related to the five senses of Knowledge, and may be regarded as a sixth sense itself.

(2). As opposed to this we are told that the knowledge of the Mind is derived from Buddhi; and the latter is, moreover, regarded as identical, for practical purposes, with the Soul.

(3). Then we see that Egoism or Abhimāna must be destroyed before the Soul can attain to its pure self-consciousness.

(4). After this we have a debate on the character of the creative energy of Prakṛiti, and see that the only way to convince those who believe in Prakṛiti as the sole or chief creator of life is to prove that what appears to belong to Nature belongs really to God.

(5). Then it is shown that there is a higher power than Prakṛiti that creates, and all creative energy should therefore be ascribed to it.

(6). Then we have a debate on the scope and character of the Vaiseshika, and see that it is an error to hold that it is the Mind alone that controls and directs the senses. We see that more

than the Mind is Buddhi, and the latter may, for practical purposes, be identified with the Soul. Hence we might say that it is Buddhi, more than the Mind, that functions through the senses.

(7). Then we see that it is only when we understand the idea of the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses that we can rise from the Vaiseshika to higher systems of thought.

(8). Finally, we are told that the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses can be regarded as a Sacrifice only when it is associated with the idea of God; and when that is absent, it ceases to be a Sacrifice.

## CHAPTER XII

### VIII. KARNA PARVA

**KARNA AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.**—THE discussion on Nyaya and Vaiseshika having ended, we have now to examine the Sankhya in so far as the creative character of Prakriti is concerned ; and that, as we have explained, is based on the vital energy transformed out of Food ; and Food is personified by Karna. And so Karna, personifying the Vegetable Kingdom or Seed, the basis of all Food on earth, and the cause of all vital energy in animals, becomes the next commander-in-chief.

**FIGHT BETWEEN KARNA AND ARJUNA.**—The chief opponent of Food is the Eater of Food, and that is Prana or vital Breath which alone can swallow Food. That is Arjuna ; and so the chief fight now is between Arjuna and Karna.

**KARNA DEFEATS ALL PANDAVA BROTHERS EXCEPT ARJUNA.**—The vital energy of Food is the physical energy of the Heart, which is superior to Buddhi, Mind, and the senses, but not to the Soul, for that is greater than the physical energy of the Heart and is seated in it. Food, again, has the power to send a person to sleep ; and in a perfect state of sleep all the energies of life, Buddhi, Mind, and the senses, together with the arms and legs, cease to function. Only Prana or Breath continues to move in and out undisturbed. And

so it may be said that Food can vanquish all these energies except *Prana*; and this is the idea of Karna's defeat of all *Pandava* brothers except Arjuna. They represent *Buddhi*, Mind, and arms and legs respectively; and Arjuna alone, personifying *Prana* or Breath, cannot be vanquished by Food.

THE QUARREL BETWEEN YUDHISHTHIRA AND ARJUNA: BHIMA SLAYS DUHSASANA AND DRINKS HIS BLOOD.—We have now to see how Breath or *Prana* can swallow Food; and to do so we have to examine the character and functions of the Heart, for both Food and *Prana* are associated and act in conjunction with it. This is the idea of the quarrel between *Yudhishtira* and Arjuna, and also of *Bhima's* slaying *Duhsasana*, tearing open his heart, and drinking his blood.

FIGHT BETWEEN ARJUNA AND KARNA: THE DEATH OF KARNA.—We are now in a position to understand how Food is swallowed by *Prana* or Breath; and this, as we have explained, is the idea of the fight between Arjuna and Karna. Then we notice that in the actual process of preparing food, the grain is pounded and pulverised, and it loses its original form; and this is the idea of *Indra's* taking away Karna's coat of mail and earrings, which refer to the rind or outer covering of grain and its form. Then we see that the animal, —at least Man—chews food before eating, and that alters the original form of grain further still. After that, when food in the mouth approaches the throat, the vital Breath draws it in, and it is then



swallowed away. This is what is described in the defeat of Karna ; and this is the meaning of the Earth's swallowing his car, when Arjuna succeeds in " slaying " him.

*A Summary of Karna Parva.*

(1). After discussing the character of Nyaya and Vaiseshika, we have to examine the nature of the Sankhya in regard to the creative character of Prakriti, based on vital energy or *semen virile*, produced from Food.

(2). We see that Food is swallowed by Breath or *Prana* ; and in order to know how that is done, we have to examine the character of the functions of the Heart, for both Food and Breath are connected with it.

(3). We see that Food has the power of putting a person to sleep, when his Buddhi, Mind, and the senses, as well as his arms and legs cease to act.

(4). Then we have to understand how Food is swallowed by Breath or *Prana*. We see that the whole form of grain is altered either in the process of preparing food or mastication ; and when food in the mouth approaches the cavity of the throat, it is Breath that draws it in, and it is in this way that we eat food.

(5). Food is said to be a Sacrifice offered to *Prana* or Breath ; and it is in this way that the Soul, acting through its vehicle *Prana*, is said to eat Food in the light of Vedanta.

## CHAPTER XIII

### IX. SALYA PARVA

SALYA AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: THE DEATH OF SALYA.—We have so far examined the character of *Nyaya*, *Vaiseshika*, and *Sankhya* separately; and now it is necessary to examine these systems as combined with one another, as *Sankhya-Nyaya* and *Nyaya-Vaiseshika*, on which the two schools of Jainism and Buddhism are based. Of these Salya personifies *Sankhya-Nyaya*, and so he is the next commander-in-chief. But as these systems have separately been examined, our task is easy now; and so Salya is defeated without difficulty and slain.

DURYODHANA'S COMMAND.—Finally we have to examine the character of *Nyaya-Vaiseshika*, which forms the basis of Buddhist thought, and that is personified by Duryodhana. And so he is the next commander-in-chief.

DURYODHANA IN THE LAKE.—Duryodhana holds that God and Nature are joint creators of life, but the share of God is smaller than that of Nature; and at the end of the debate it is easy to show that this is an erroneous view. We have seen that both parties had agreed that God and Nature are joint creators of life, but in varying degrees; and no one had assumed that there is no place for God in the scheme of the universe. That is the

pure Sankhya point of view, the very reverse of Vedānta; and on this assumption there could be no debate. Duryodhana, finding that it is impossible for him to argue on the basis of Buddhism which he personifies, makes an attempt to abandon all the premises that had been settled at the commencement of the debate, and to revert to the pure Sankhya, and take up the same position that Sakuni had done in the 'Gambling Match.' That is the significance of his hiding himself in a lake of cold and solidified water which, as we have shown, symbolizes Nature or Prakṛiti.

THE CHALLENGE TO DURYODHANA.—But Duryodhana cannot be allowed to break away from the premises of the debate in this way; and so he is challenged to come out of his pure Sankhya position (the lake of water), and carry on the discussion or fight. He realizes that he represents Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika or Buddhism, and cannot take up the pure Sankhya position; and so he comes out of the lake and takes up the challenge thrown out to him.

THE CLUB FIGHT.—We have explained that the Nyāya is based on the creative character of the senses of Knowledge, and the Vaiśeṣika on that of the Mind; and both of these are personified by Duryodhana. Again, we see that we rise from Nyāya to the Vaiśeṣika through the Sacrifice of the senses; and to understand the truth of this system, we have to examine the character of the Sacrifice of the senses of Knowledge. Duryodhana desires that the truth and not the error

of his system be explored; and so he wishes to argue in the light of the Sacrifice of the senses of Knowledge, and calls upon his opponents to dislodge him from his position. In other words, he holds that when the senses of Knowledge are controlled and act creatively and in the name of God, they are under the direction of the Mind more than any other energy; and he asks his opponents to examine the matter in the light of the character of the Mind and to show where the error lies. And, as Bhīma personifies the Mind of Man (*Pandavas*), the fight is between Duryodhana and him. They have to fight with the Club or Mace, which symbolizes the idea of the Sacrifice of the senses of Knowledge.

THE BLOW ON THE THIGH: THE DEATH OF DURYODHANA.—As we have pointed out, we have to examine the idea of the Sacrifice or creative and selfless function of the senses of Knowledge; and Duryodhana maintains that it is the Mind that controls them. Man, established in Vedānta, holds on the other hand, that it is the Soul that acts through all the energies of life, including the senses. This is the idea of Kṛishṇa's suggestion and Bhīma's blow on the thigh of Duryodhana, as a result of which that hero is overthrown.

THE RESULT OF DURYODHANA'S FALL.—Vedānta has won its victory now, and according to it all life is conceived as created by God alone. Nature is an aspect of his energy, and it is he who creates Nature himself. And so it is said that, as a result of Duryodhana's fall, all forms of Nature

(Women) appeared like forms of God (Men), and *vice versa*. In other words the distinction between Nature and God or Purusha and Prakṛiti vanished, for all of them were believed to be of God.

THE BURNING OF ARJUNA'S CAR.—Vedānta has come out victorious indeed. But it is based on the character of *Prāṇa* or vital Breath as the vehicle of the Soul, and the two are usually identified. But we have to admit that *Prāṇa* partakes of the element Air as well; and when the idea of God or Soul is absent, it has little to do with the latter, and may be regarded as a physical energy, to be referred to the element Air. This is the idea of the burning of Arjuna's car, after both he and *Kṛishṇa* alight from it at the end of the "battle" or debate.

THE SURVIVORS OF THE KAURAVAS.—We have seen that the chief premises of the debate were (1) that God and Nature are joint creators of life, and (2) that necessary actions should be performed as a Sacrifice. But the whole idea may be examined in terms of Action. Three systems of thought—*Sāṅkhya*, *Nyāya*, and *Vaiśeṣika*, were under debate; and they were opposed by Vedānta or, its first manifestation, *Yoga*; and each of the three had admitted to the necessity of Action. This, as we have seen, is the position of Jainism and Buddhism, based on *Sāṅkhya-Nyāya* and *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* respectively. As each of the three systems accepts the necessity of performing actions, there are three survivors of the Kaurava hosts:—*Kṛpā* representing the idea of Action in the light of the

Sankhya ; Kṛitavarman in the light of Nyaya ; and Asvatthaman in the light of the Vaisesika. And these alone survive.

*A Summary of Salya Parva.*

(1). After having examined separately the three systems under debate, it is necessary to examine them jointly as Sankhya-Nyaya and Nyaya-Vaisesika which form the basis of Jainism and Buddhism respectively. And after what has been done, the problem is easy enough.

(2). The most interesting point in this connection is the relation between the Mind and the senses of Knowledge ; and we see that, more than the Mind, it is the Soul that controls the senses.

(3). The debate ends in the victory of Vedānta, as a result of which we realize that all that is of Nature is really of God, and it is God who creates Nature or Prakṛiti.

## CHAPTER XIV

### X. SAUPTIKA PARVA

THE SCHEME OF ASVATTHAMAN : THE SLAUGHTER OF PANCHALAS.—We have seen that Vedānta has come out victorious in this great debate with Buddhism and its allies ; but there are a few points which require to be elucidated. We have pointed out that the essential idea of Vedānta is based on Action as a Sacrifice ; and it is by means of the Sacrifice of the Mind and the senses that we rise from Jainism and Buddhism to higher systems of thought. But Sacrifice, to be truly such, must express the idea of God, without which it is a Sacrifice but in name, and so must be renounced. This is the idea of the scheme of Asvatthaman. He desires to prove that when the idea of God, or the Soul believing in God, is absent, a Sacrifice is not a Sacrifice at all ; and this is expressed in terms of his slaying Dhrishtadyumna and the Panchalas in the absence of Krishna and Arjuna.

THE SURVIVORS OF THE PANDAVAS.—After this the idea of Vedānta is complete, and Man, imbued with the true spirit of Sacrifice and believing in God as the sole supreme Creator of the universe, remains. And so of the Pandava hosts only the five brothers (Man), with Draupadī (Sacrifice), Krishna (God) and Satyaki (Truth), survive.

THE GEM OF ASVATTHAMAN.—Asvatthaman represents the idea of the association of the Mind with the senses of Action, and this may be said to be the gem that he wears. But according to Vedānta it is the Soul that directs and controls the senses through the Mind; and so it is the Soul and not the Mind that must be regarded as the sovereign of the senses. Hence, if Vedānta be true, Asvatthaman must part with the gem of the idea that he wears. This is exactly what happens, and he hands it over to Bhīma (Mind) supported by Yudhishthira (Buddhi), Arjuna (Soul) and Krishna (God).

THE WEAPON OF ASVATTHAMAN: UTTARA AND PARIKSHIT.—But if Vedānta is established, we must regard God alone as the sole Creator of the universe, and Nature or Prakṛiti must in itself be held to be non-creative or sterile. Hence, as Woman represents Nature or Prakṛiti, the weapon (argument) of Asvatthaman falls on the womb of Pāṇḍava women and renders them sterile, and the same happens to Uttara too, for she personifies Nature or Prakṛiti wedded to Egoism or Abhimāna (Abhimanyu).

But according to Vedānta it is God who creates Prakṛiti and fills it with his own creative power, and then the two united together create. And so, by the grace of Krishna (God), the still-born child of Uttara (Prakṛiti) is revived; and he is Parikshit or the manifest world that spreads around. This is the literal meaning of the word Parikshit.



*A Summary of Sautika Parva.*

(1). The essential idea of Vedānta, which has succeeded in this debate, is based on Sacrifice; and Sacrifice implies selfless action, characterized by self-control, performed for the benefit of all, and in the name of God.

(2). If the idea of God, or the Soul imbued with faith in God, is absent, an action, ostensibly regarded as a Sacrifice, ceases to be so and must be renounced.

(3). The next point that emerges out of this debate is that, if God is the sole supreme Creator of the universe, Nature should be regarded as sterile and devoid of all creative energy.

(4). This is held to be an erroneous view; for the real idea of Vedānta is that God creates Nature or Prakṛiti and gives to it his own creative power; so that Nature, through his grace, becomes creative too.

## CHAPTER XV

### XI. STRI PARVA

THE WAIL OF WOMEN.—WE have seen the essential truth of all systems of Philosophy in this great debate ; and, in the light of Vedānta, we see Nature or Prakṛiti in its true colour and form. And so the women of the house of Kauravas and Pandavas,—representing different forms of Prakṛiti,—come out with their veils withdrawn, and show themselves as they really are. This is the point of their wail by the side of their deceased husbands, brothers and sons.

THE CURSE OF GANDHARI.—We have seen how Man, born in Jainism, has risen from the system of his birth to Vedānta, and so the Ascending Scale of thought is over. To complete the whole range of human thought, however, we must understand the Descending Scale as well. In this connection we have explained that the number eighteen refers to the conflict of three great systems of thought,—Yoga, in itself and as the first manifestation of Vedānta, and Vaiseshika and Nyāya. Man has attained to Vedānta or what is for practical purposes identified with it, Yoga; and he can descend down to lower systems by abandoning the idea of Sacrifice. In one conflict of the three systems, that is in one cycle of eighteen years he can come down to the Vaiseshika ; and in another cycle of eighteen years again, by abjur-

ing Sacrifice, he can descend to Nyaya, holding that all life is created by Nature or Prakriti, and God, if he exists, is either a spectator of Prakriti's work, or has, at best, but a small share in it.

Thus we deny creation to God, and that is his death; for whenever the existence of God as a Creator is denied, he dies in the hearts of those who refuse to accept him. Otherwise God, if he be God indeed, can never die. He dies only in the sense that he is denied. And so in twice eighteen or thirty-six years after the attainment of Vedanta on the field of Kurukshetra by Man, Krishna is told that he himself will cease to be. This is the meaning of the Curse of Gandhari, the queen or Prakriti of the Nyaya system of thought, according to which God is but a spectator of Nature's work.

*A Summary of Stri Parva.*

(1). When we have understood the essence of all systems of Philosophy, we know what Nature or Prakriti really is.

(2). There are two Scales of thought,—the Ascending and the Descending one. In the one we rise from Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism to Yoga-Vedanta or Vaishnavism; and in the other we drop down from the latter to the former again.

(3). When in the Descending Scale of thought we come down to Sankhya-Nyaya or Jainism,

we believe that God has no hand in the creation of life, that it is Nature that creates, and God is at best a spectator of its work. This is a denial of God as a Creator of the universe ; and when people come to hold this view, the very idea of God dies in the world.

## CHAPTER XVI

### XII. SANTI PARVA

THE DOUBTS OF YUDHISHTHIRA.—MAN has attained to Vedānta or to Yoga which, for practical purposes, is identified with it; and he holds that Knowledge and Action are inseparable, and if a distinction between them is made, then Action and not Knowledge is the goal of life. But Yoga, in its own character, and with reference to Buddhi on which it is based, holds that Knowledge is the final goal; and it is only when Buddhi is for practical purposes identified with the Soul, that it holds, with Vedānta, that Action is the ultimate end. There is thus a possibility of an ambiguity so far as the Yoga system of thought is concerned; and so Yudhishthira, who personifies Buddhi, the basis of Yoga, desires to have his doubts removed. It is therefore necessary to review the whole position again, and make a brief survey of all systems of Philosophy from Sankhya to Vedānta and also the corresponding systems of Religion. The Santi Parva is the twelfth Parva or section of the Mahābhārata; and as this number refers to Buddhi as the highest creative energy of life (MM. I, 199), we have in this Parva an account of all systems of Philosophy and Religion up to and including Yoga, based on Buddhi.

THE ADVICE OF KRISHNA: BHISHMA'S DISCOURSE.—The best teacher of Philosophy is he

who, having accepted a lower system of thought, has been converted to a higher one. That is Bhishma, who has been converted from Nyaya to Vedānta; and so Krishna believes that he is the best person to resolve the doubts of Yudhishtira, and asks him to do so.

THE DISCOURSE OF BHṚIGU.—We have explained that in our study of anything we must begin at the very bottom, and that in Philosophy is Sankhya-Nyaya, corresponding to which we have the two schools of Jaina religion. This is the discourse of Bhṛigu as given by Bhishma; and then Bhishma in his own discourse which follows, offers his criticism of this system.

THE OPINION OF MANU.—After Sankhya-Nyaya we have Nyaya-Vaisesika, corresponding to which we have the two schools of Buddhism; and a description of this is given in the opinion of Manu, and its criticism in the discourse of Bhishma that follows.

THE DISCOURSE OF VYASA: THE NAMES OF MAHADEVA.—We have dealt with Jainism and Buddhism and their corresponding systems of Philosophy. After this we have the religion of Mahadeva and its corresponding system of thought, *viz.*, principal Yoga; and an account of this is given by Vyasa, who personifies Buddhi, the highest energy of this system, and it is followed by a description of Mahadeva in his many names.

THE DISCOURSE OF VASISHTHA.—Having examined these systems, it is necessary to understand

the connection as well as the difference between them. This is given in the discourse of Vasishtha.

NARADA'S HYMN TO NARAYANA: THE VISION OF NARAYANA.—Then we have to understand that it is by means of Sacrifice that we rise from a lower to a higher system of thought, ending ultimately in Vedānta. This is the idea of Nārada's hymn to Nārāyana and the vision of God.

BRAHMAN'S HYMN TO NARAYANA.—Finally, we have to understand that the religion of Mahadeva and Vishnu is superior to Buddhism and Jainism, which have Brahman for their supreme deity (MM. II, 297-306). This is the idea of the hymn of Brahman addressed to Nārāyana.

*A Summary of Santi Parva.*

(1). After this great debate it is necessary to review all that has been done.

(2). We have to begin from the known to the unknown, or the lower to the higher, and so Sāṅkhya-Nyāya, the basis of the two schools of Jainism, is the first to be reviewed.

(3). After this comes Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, the basis of the two schools of Buddhism.

(4). Then we have to study the religion of Mahadeva, and its corresponding system of thought.

(5). After having examined these systems separately, it is necessary to study them side by side

and know the points of agreement and difference between them.

(6). Then we have to understand that we can rise from a lower to a higher system of thought, ending ultimately in Vedānta, through the idea of Sacrifice, which gives us the vision of God.

(7). In conclusion we have to understand that the religion of Mahadeva and Vishnu is superior to Buddhism and Jainism.



## CHAPTER XVII

### XIII. ANUSASANA PARVA

THE FORM AND WORSHIP OF MAHADEVA.—We have done with Jainism, Buddhism, and the religion of Mahadeva; now we have to examine the religion of Vishnu, and its range corresponds, as we have explained, to principal Vedānta, embracing the character of the Soul, Buddhi, and the Mind. Beginning at the lower end, we have the Mind, and its deity is Mahadeva; and so we have a description of this God now.

BHISHMA ADORES KRISHNA.—After the Mind we have Buddhi which is, for practical purposes, identified with the Soul. And so we get a description of Krishna,—the supreme deity of Vedānta, the God who dwells in the Heart and Soul and is made manifest in his Buddhi-form,—in the hymn of adoration addressed by Bhishma to Krishna.

THE DEATH OF BHISHMA.—This completes our survey of all systems of Philosophy and Religion. The work of Bhishma is ended now, and so he passes away.

#### *A Summary of Anusasana Parva.*

After dealing with Jainism and Buddhism as well as the religion of Mahadeva, it is necessary to study the religion of Vishnu, and its corresponding system of thought, viz., principal Vedānta.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### XIV. ASVAMEDHA PARVA

THE HORSE SACRIFICE.—We have examined all systems of Philosophy and Religion, and seen how we rise from a lower to a higher one by means of the idea of Sacrifice. At the bottom of all is the Sacrifice of the senses, by means of which we rise from *Sāṅkhya* to *Nyāya* and thence to the *Vaiśeṣika* ; then by the Sacrifice of the Mind we go up to *Yoga* ; and thence by the Sacrifice of *Buddhi* to *Vedānta*. All these different forms of Sacrifice have in them the idea of God as a Creator of the universe ; and so long as we have even the lowest conception of Sacrifice,—*viz.*, the Sacrifice of the senses, we cannot forget God. This is the idea of the Sacrifice of the Horse, for the Horse is a symbol of the senses in sacred literature (MM. I, 324-326).

THE REQUEST OF ARJUNA TO KRISHNA : THE ANUGITA.—We have seen that according to *Vedānta*, in which Man has been established now, all acts of Sacrifice are performed by the Soul and they contain the essence of the idea of God. The Soul (*Arjuna*), therefore, desires to understand the idea of Sacrifice from God (*Krishna*) himself. This is the request of *Arjuna* to *Krishna*, and it is this that is expressed in the discourse of the *Anugita*.

THE BIRTH OF PARIKSHIT.—When we realize how Sacrifice embodies the idea of God, we can understand how all our actions, associated with Nature or Prakriti, can be linked up with God when they are performed as a Sacrifice. This is the idea of Parikshit as a still-born child, revived by the grace of Krishna, implying that the world of Nature (Parikshit) is like something dead if it is not filled with the idea of God; but when it possesses the grace of God and is characterized by Sacrifice, it comes to a newer life. It also signifies that God by his own grace gives to Nature or Prakriti his own power to create.

THE DISMEMBERMENT OF THE HORSE: THE PLACE OF DRAUPADI.—All Sacrifice is a creative function; and the Sacrifice of the senses is controlled by the Mind, Buddhi, and above all by the Soul, befriended by the over-Soul or God. And so all the Pandava brothers (who personify these energies), with Draupadi (Sacrifice) and Krishna (God), take part in the Sacrifice. Then, as each of the senses is capable of separate action conceived as a Sacrifice, the different limbs of the Horse (senses) are separated and offered as a Sacrifice. Draupadi is assigned an important place because she personifies the creative Sacrifice of the senses and the Mind, always pervaded by the idea of God.

### *A Summary of Asvamedha Parva.*

(1) When we study all systems of Hindu Philosophy and Religion, we see that they are all connected together by means of the idea of Sac-

rice, which contains the essence of the idea of God.

(2). Then we realize how Nature, which is like something dead without God, can be revived by means of his name.

(3). The basis of all Sacrifice is the Sacrifice of the senses ; that is, when the actions of our senses and the knowledge acquired by them are characterized by selflessness and self-control and are meant for the benefit of all. So long as this is so, we cannot forget God.

(4). The senses function separately, but each of them is associated with the Mind, Buddhi, and the Soul. And God is always present when they act in a spirit of Sacrifice.

## CHAPTER XIX

### XV. ASRAMAVASIKA PARVA

THE REIGN OF DHIRTARASHTRA AND PANDAVAS.—We have seen how Man has been established in Vedānta which includes and is a culmination of all systems of Philosophy. We have also seen that Dhṛitarashṭra, who personifies Buddhism, has been converted to Vedānta ; but he still retains his own character. And so for some time the Pandavas (Man) and the blind old King rule together in this world of life.

KING DHIRTARASHTRA RETIRES INTO A FOREST.—But the essential idea of Buddhism is different to that of Vedānta, and the two cannot live together in peace for ever. Besides, having understood the Ascending Scale of thought, it is necessary for us to understand the Descending Scale as well. We have seen that we rise from a lower to a higher system through the idea of Sacrifice ; and when this is denied, we fall from a higher to a lower system. And so, when Bhīma offends the blind old king, the idea of Sacrifice is denied, and so we descend from principal Vedānta or Vaiṣṇavism to principal Yoga or Sāivism. Then Dhṛitarashṭra and all those who are specially associated with him, *viz.*, Gandhārī, Kuntī, Vidura and Sanjaya, retire into a forest, knowing that their end is near.

THE DEATH OF VIDURA.—Vidura personifies the Mind as the centre of all principal systems of

thought. Now we are told that at dissolution each lower energy is absorbed in the next higher one (MM. I. 73, n. 3.) ; and so Vidura (Mind) enters the body of Yudhishthira (Buddhi), limb by limb and passes away.

THE DEATH OF DHRTARASHTRA AND OTHERS.—We have seen that with the offence given by Bhima to the king, all have descended from Vedānta to Yoga, whose deity is Agni, the god of Buddhi. As Yoga holds to Action as a Sacrifice, they cause a sacrificial Fire (Agni) to be lighted, which spreads and dissolves them all. This is their end. Only Sanjaya, who has been converted to the Vaiseshika as the centre of all systems of thought, escapes to tell the tale of what has happened. This takes place eighteen years after the battle of Kurukshetra to indicate that we have come down by one stage in the Descending Scale of thought.

*A Summary of Asramavasika Parva.*

(1). We have seen how we rise from a lower to a higher system of thought by means of the idea of Sacrifice ; and now it is necessary for us to understand how, when Sacrifice is denied, we can sink from a higher to a lower system.

(2). The number eighteen represents the conflict of three great systems of thought,—Yoga as identical, for all practical purposes, with Vedānta, and Vaiseshika and Nyaya. Man is now established in Vaishnavism or principal Vedānta ; and in one cycle of thought or eighteen years he descends to the next lower system, viz., Saivism or principal Yoga by disregarding the idea of Sacrifice.

## CHAPTER XX

### XVI. MAUSALA PARVA

THE IDEA OF THE PARVA.—We have seen how in one cycle of Descending thought or eighteen years, we can go down from Vaishnavism to Saivism when the idea of Sacrifice is denied; and when the same thing happens again, we go further down to Buddhism and Jainism, the two divisions of principal Sankhya, with all their denial of the true idea of God. This is the meaning of the disguise of Samba, the insult offered to the Rishis and their curse, resulting in the death of Balarama and Krishna, who personify Prana as the vehicle of the Soul, and the Supreme Soul respectively.

THE DISGUISE OF SAMBA.—We have seen that Vedanta was established and Nyaya defeated when Bhishma saw that a Woman (Prakriti) could be transformed into a Man (Purusha or God) through Sacrifice. When the reverse of this happens, that is, when an expression of God or Man is transformed into an expression of Prakriti or Woman, through lack of reverence for elders or denial of Sacrifice, Vedanta vanishes and Nyaya is re-established once more. In other words, when we hold that what really belongs to God (Man) is to be attributed to Nature or Prakriti (Woman), and when we deny the idea of Sacrifice, we descend from Vedanta to Nyaya. And so when Samba, a son of Krishna, disguises himself as a woman

and insults the *Rishis*, his action is followed by the death *Krishna* and his race.

THE IRON BOLT.—We have seen how we descend from principal Yoga or Saivism to principal *Sankhya* or Buddhism and Jainism in the second Descending Scale of thought; and, then we come to believe that the Mind, associated with the senses, is the highest creative energy of life. This is the Bolt of Iron to which *Samba* gives birth.

THE ORDER OF KRISHNA.—We can prevent this lapse into Buddhism and Jainism only if we do not imbibe the idea that the Mind is the highest creative energy of life; and so *Krishna* and *Balarama* command that the people should not take any intoxicating liquors, for Wine of all kinds is characterized by Mind energy (MM. I., 374-375). Further, we see that intoxicating drinks undermine self-control and so destroy the essence of Sacrifice and the idea of God; and to prevent this catastrophe *Krishna* and *Balarama* forbid their use.

THE DRUNKEN REVEL: THE FIGHT: THE DESTRUCTION OF THE RACE OF KRISHNA.—But we have to understand the Descending Scale of thought, ending in the denial of God as Creator of the universe. And so the people lose the idea of Sacrifice and self-control, take to drink and fight, with the result that the very name of God is forgotten.

THE DEATH OF BALARAMA AND KRISHNA.—When all this happens, God dies in the hearts of



men. It is only in this sense, that is when he is denied, when all Sacrifice, self-control and goodness is denied, that God passes away from this world. This is the death of *Krishna*.

But when a person is passing away, before the Soul vanishes, it is *Prana* or vital breath that flies. It passes out, and soon after it is followed by the Soul. And so *Balarama*, who personifies Breath or *Prana*, passes away first, and he is followed by *Krishna*, the Supreme Soul of the universe.

THE ARRIVAL OF ARJUNA: THE DEATH OF VASUDEVA: THE SUBMERSION OF DVARAKA.—Man, along with others, has come down to Buddhism and Jainism; and so Arjuna, the *Prana* or Soul of Man, comes to the scene to realize what has happened. He finds that the very source of the idea of God as a Creator of the universe has disappeared,—and that is the death of Vasudeva, the father of *Krishna*. The fundamental idea of God lay in the Sacrifice of the senses (*Asvamedha*). But all that is now gone and the people believe that it is Nature that reigns supreme. This is the idea of the submersion of *Dvaraka* (the body of the senses of Knowledge and Action) in the Ocean, symbolic of Nature or *Prakriti*.

THE ATTACK OF ROBBERS.—After this happens, all forms of manifest life come to owe their allegiance to Nature and not to God; and this is the idea of the attack of robbers who carry away all the women (forms of *Prakriti*) who accompany Arjuna or the human Soul.

*A Summary of Mausala Parva.*

(1). In one Descending Cycle of thought, represented by the number eighteen, we go down from Vaishnavism to Saivism ; and then in another to Buddhism and Jainism ; and all this happens when the idea of Sacrifice is denied.

(2). Then, when we come down to Buddhism and Jainism, we come to believe in Nature or Prakriti as the creator of life, and hold that what really belongs to God is to be attributed to Nature.

(3). We then came to believe that the Mind, associated with the senses, is the highest creative energy of life.

(4). The only way to prevent this lapse is to exercise self-control, and not to give way to drink.

(5). But if we lose self-control and give way to drink, and hold that the Mind is the highest creative energy of life, we forget God, and he dies within us.

(6). When we forget God, we forget all Sacrifice too, and so lose hold of the very source of the idea of God.

(7). When this happens, we ascribe all forms of life to Nature or Prakriti, and not to God.

## CHAPTER XXI

### XVII. MAHAPRASTHANA PARVA

THE SUCCESSORS OF THE PANDAVAS.—We have seen how in two cycles of Descending thought, each represented by the number eighteen or the conflict of corresponding systems, we come down from Vaishnavism to Saivism, and thence to Buddhism and Jainism ; and it is these two that prevail. But they are the two divisions of principal Sankhya, whose range extends from the Mind to the senses of Knowledge and Action ; and we have seen how all the principal systems meet in the region of the Mind. In other words, although Buddhism and Jainism have come to prevail for the time being, other higher systems of thought are not altogether dead ; for with the idea of the Mind in the principal Sankhya, we get two other ideas of the Mind associated with principal Yoga and principal Vedanta as well. And so if the Mind is to be regarded as the chief creative energy of life, all the three points of view of the Mind, corresponding to the three principal systems of thought, must be allowed to live. These are the three successors of the *Pandavas* or *Man*. *Vajra* means “ lightning ” and refers to the Mind in principal Vedanta or Vaishnavism ; *Yuyutsu* personifies Mind in principal Yoga or Saivism ; while *Parikshit*, or the world of life around, refers to the Mind in principal Sankhya or Buddhism and Jainism. And it is for this reason that

Yudhishthira appoints Kṛipa, the teacher of the Sāṅkhya system, as the preceptor of Parikṣhit.

THE LAST JOURNEY.—We have now come to the end of the problem or the journey of life. We have seen the progress of Man through both the Ascending and Descending Scales of thought; and the whole cycle of life and action, in each individual as well as the whole human race, is over now. We see that when we are young and full of life, we have Action for our goal; and this corresponds to the Ascending Scale from Jainism to Vedānta. But when we grow old, we are unable to act, and wish to become mere spectators of the drama of life; and so come to believe that Knowledge and not Action is the final end. This corresponds to the Descending Scale from Vedānta to Buddhism and Jainism once more. There is now nothing more to be said. Man has done his work, and now must pass. This is the last journey of the *Pandavas*.

THE DEATH OF THE PANDAVAS.—The process of death is the opposite of birth; and so Man passes away in the reverse order of his birth. When he is born, his head comes out first; then the brows appear; then the organs of the senses through which Breath passes; and then the arms, and finally the legs. These, as we have seen, are the five *Pandava* brothers,—Yudhishthira, Bhīma, Arjuna, and the twins Nakula and Sahadeva respectively. Then, when Man grows, he understands the idea of the Sacrifice of the senses and the Mind, and that is Draupadī.

Now the process of death is the reverse of birth. When death approaches, we are unable to perform even the most necessary acts or Sacrifice, and so the first to pass is Draupadi. Then the legs, and after them the arms become cold; and so Sahadeva and Nakula pass. Then Prana or vital Breath passes and with it the Soul; and that is Arjuna. But *all* life does *not* depart with the passing of Prana. There is still some warmth in the head; and it slowly recedes, first of all from the brows, and then from the upper part of the head. That is Bhima and Yudhishthira.

YUDHISHTHIRA AND HIS DOG.—We have seen that Man has come down to Nyaya, which examines all life in the light of the senses of Knowledge and holds that Prakriti is the highest creative energy of life (MM. II, 148-162); and we have seen that the first and highest manifest form of the creative energy of Prakriti is Mahat or Buddhi (MM. II, 169-171). Now it is said that Man is but as his faith<sup>1</sup>; and if he has come to believe in the principal Sankhya (Buddhism and Jainism), whose centre is Nyaya, his end must conform to that system too.<sup>2</sup> And so Yudhishthira, who personifies Buddhi, the highest energy of this system, accompanied by the senses of Knowledge, in whose light we are to understand all life,—should survive. And so we are told that Yudhishthira, followed by his Dog, personifying the senses of Knowledge, passed on to the world beyond.

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1. BhG. XVII, 2.

2. BhG. VIII, 6.

*A Summary of Mahaprasthana Parva.*

(1). Man has accepted Buddhism and Jainism, the two divisions of principal Sankhya, and holds that the Mind is the highest creative energy of its.

(2) But the creative energy of the Mind has three aspects corresponding to the three principal systems of thought which meet in its region ; and if we believe in the Mind we must accept all its three points of view. In other words the creative character of the Mind contains the essence of all principal systems of thought.

(3) We have seen both the Ascending and Descending Scales of thought and so come to the end of our task. We have only to show how Man passes away in the reverse order of his birth.

(4). Then finally we have to understand if anything survives after death. A man is but as his faith, and to that he conforms even in his death. Man has come to believe in Prakṛiti as the chief creative energy of life, and in Buddhi as its highest manifest form ; and he holds that all life must be examined in the light of his senses of Knowledge. And so it is Buddhi that survives, and it is accompanied by the senses of Knowledge after death. This is the end of Man according to the Nyaya system of thought, on which is based the Hinayana school of Buddhism and the Svetambara school of Jainism.

## CHAPTER XXII

### XVIII. SVARGAROHANIKA PARVA

THE ILLUSION OF HELL.—We have seen how when we have life in us and faith in God, we believe in Action as the goal of life. But when we grow old and our faith weakens, we wish to be but spectators of the drama of life, and come to believe that God is so too. But the world is eternally based on the law of Action, the essence of Vedānta, founded on *Prana* and the unmanifest character of the Soul. The whole universe proclaims the truth of this law,—the law of life wherever there is God.

But Man had accepted *Nyaya* at the time of his death, and so in the other world he finds himself at first at the stage where he was below,—*Buddhi* accompanied by the senses of Knowledge. That is *Naraka* or Hell to which *Yudhishthira* goes at first.

THE ABODE OF THE HAPPY ONES.—But Vedānta is the one real Truth of Life. It is based on the unmanifest energy of the Soul, and so the kingdom of the Soul and the world of the unmanifest belong to Vedānta, with God as the sole Supreme Creator of the universe. And so before long Man beholds the ultimate Truth, and sees that all, without exception, whatever their belief, are gathered into the bosom of God.

“Howsoever men approach me, even so do I accept them; for whatever path they follow is mine, O Arjuna.”

END OF VOLUME III.